The Rise and Fall of Bob Torricelli JASON ZENGERLE

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Two Cheers for Bertrand Russell THOMAS NAGEL

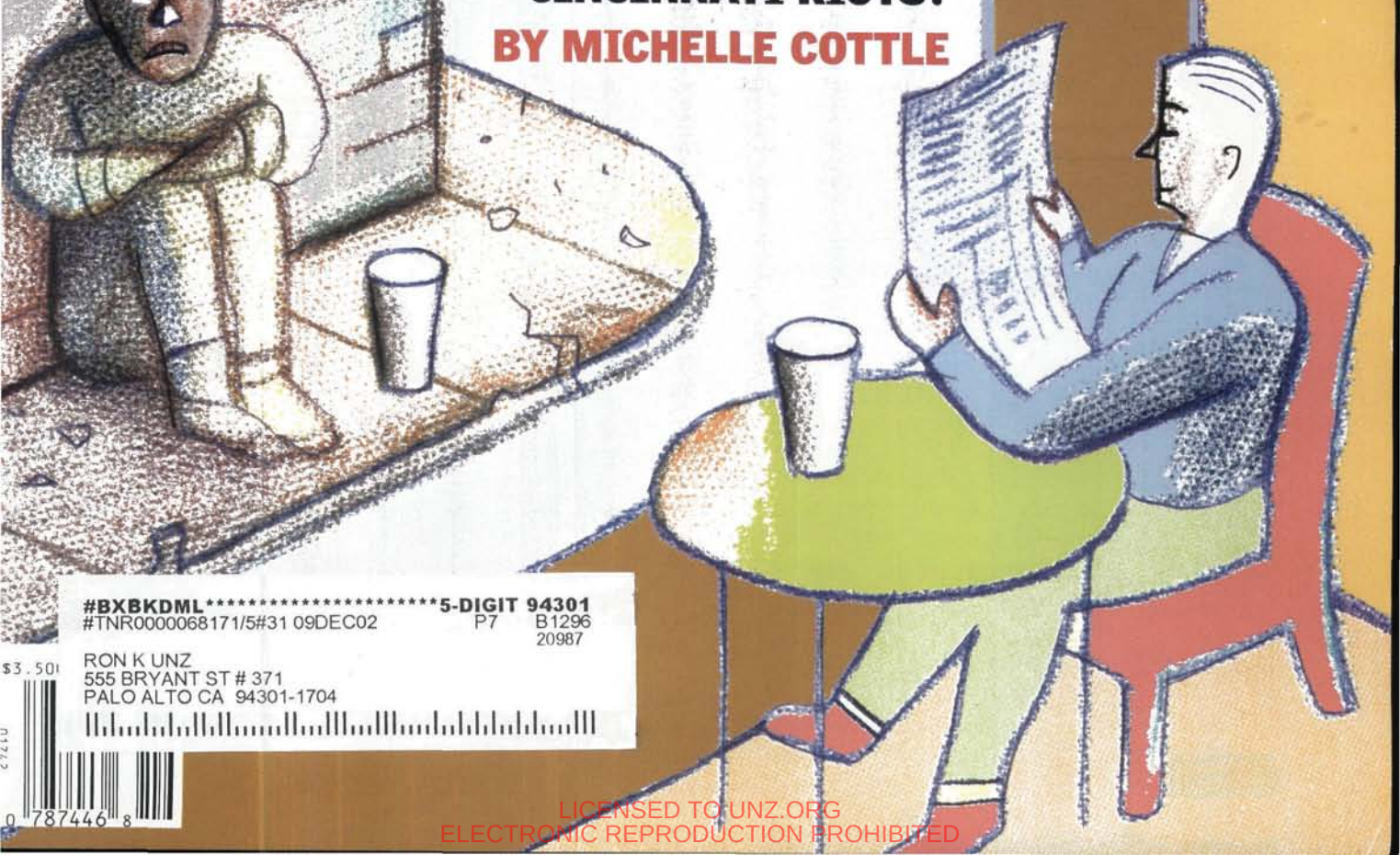
Two Cheers for Eugene Rivers FRANKLIN FOER

MAY 7, 2001

INTEGRATION BLUES

DID GENTRIFICATION CAUSE THE CINCINNATI RIOTS?

BY MICHELLE COTTLE



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THE NEW REPUBLIC
A Journal of Politics and the Arts

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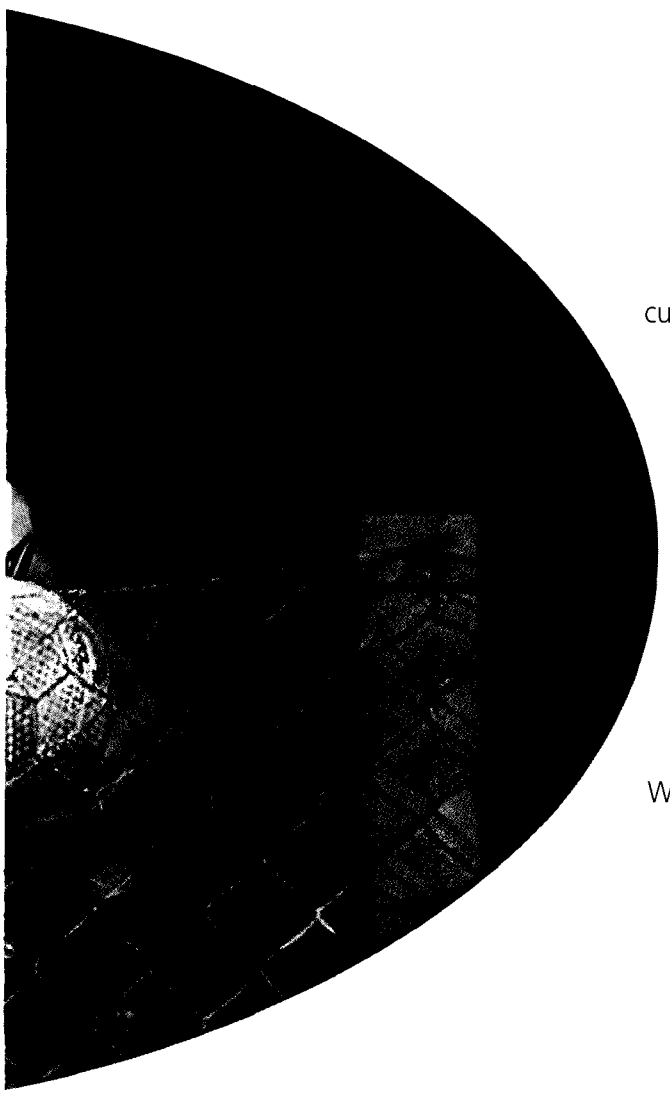
TOMORROW'S CURES



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Professional obligation

TO THE EDITORS:

The merits of the Marc Rich pardon as Jack Quinn presented them—whether intelligently considered or weak—have by now been completely obscured by the demonization of Rich by his original prosecutors and by the media. Indeed, some journalists seem to feel that it's within their professional obligation to pile onto all those who sought to assist Rich. Franklin Foer may believe he's at liberty to take gratuitous shots at Quinn ("Tanked," March 26), but that doesn't mean he's being accurate or fair. First, as former White House Counsel Beth Nolan has testified, Quinn never violated the Clinton anti-lobbying order he helped draft when he sought a pardon for Rich. Nolan and her staff agreed that the order includes an exception for communications regarding criminal law enforcement proceedings and that the exception certainly covered Quinn's contacts on behalf of a pardon.

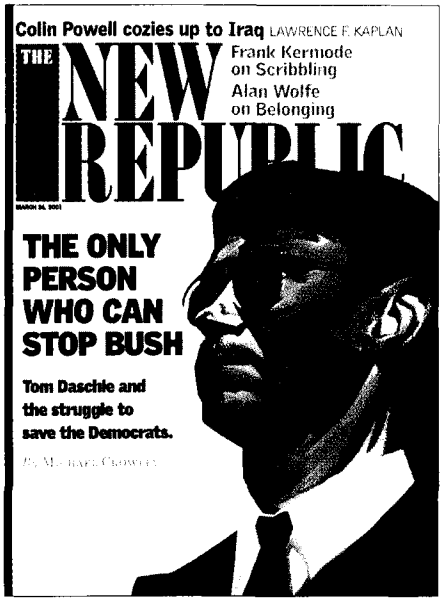
Second, Quinn received no compensation from Rich for his pursuit of the pardon (Quinn's prior firm had been paid in 1999 for the failed efforts of Quinn and other lawyers when they approached the Southern District about the Rich indictment but were rebuffed), yet Quinn felt compelled to help Rich because he believed the indictment was seriously flawed. While one can disagree with and criticize the Rich pardon, one should also hope the day never comes when lawyers are cowed from representing unpopular defendants because they risk having their reputations smeared by journalists like Foer.

JEFF CONNAUGHTON
Washington, D.C.

Crash course

TO THE EDITORS:

I spent years trying to understand why motorist safety commanded so much attention while pedestrians were ignored or vilified ("Street Sign," by Gregg Easterbrook, March 26). I realized that when ordinary people talk about safety, they mean being able to get around on foot or in cars without being endangered by others—they mean crash prevention. But when the federal government talks about safety, it means "safe crashing" for motorists. Seat belts, air bags, guardrails, breakaway light poles, and median barriers are all about crashing. "Safe" cars are those that perform well in crashes. The promotion of "safe crashing" as "safety" actually undermines our safety on foot and in vehicles. We need to return to crash prevention. Orderly movement should be the first order of business.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THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN STOP BUSH
Tom Daschle and the struggle to save the Democrats.

MARIE BIRNBAUM
Via the Internet

Dent

TO THE EDITORS:

I take issue with Marcia Yablon's assertion that George W. Bush "sold out" children by axing the New Urgent School Repair Initiative, which would have allocated $1.2 billion nationally in school repair funds ("Building Trade," March 26). I am a school board member in Brevard County, the ninth-largest of 67 districts in Florida. My district needs approximately $500 million to bring all our school facilities up to standard. The school repair initiative would not be enough to make a dent in Florida's facility needs, let alone those of the whole country. If the federal government wishes to bravely confront the problem of crumbling schools, it is going to take a cooperative effort with the states. A Band-Aid of $1.2 billion is not the answer.

BEA FOWLER
Cocoa Beach, Florida

Pathological

TO THE EDITORS:

Andrew Sullivan is a light of insight and reason in "Profit of Doom?" (March 26): Making drug companies the villains is not only wrong, it can also lead to disaster. As a doctor, I can assure you that, since the discovery of penicillin, the pharmaceutical industry has done an amazing job of staying ahead of pathological microbes in the race for our lives. Given the incredible ability of these bugs to mutate into resistant forms, there is no doubt that effective antimicrobials must constantly be developed. If economics forces drug companies out of developing new medications, we will be hit by plagues not seen since the Middle Ages—especially given our modern ability to travel and spread disease. People seem to think this industry operates in a separate economic reality. It does not—and if society tries to force these companies into a situation where it doesn't pay to develop new medications, they won't.

JOSEPH SUGERMAN
Via the Internet

TO THE EDITORS:

Seldom have I seen the truth spoken so succinctly as did Andrew Sullivan when he wrote: "Drug companies, after all, are not designed to cure diseases.... They're designed to satisfy shareholders." Therein lies the problem.

ROBERT SEYMOUR
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Non-German question

TO THE EDITORS:

In "German Question" (March 19), Martin Peretz mentions that Joschka Fischer favors Europeanism over Germanism. This begs the question: What advantages does the former have over the latter? There is certainly no dearth of far-right violence in the rest of Europe. What differentiates Germany from the rest of Europe and the world is its history. Russia, France, Austria, Japan, and the United States may have their skeletons, but none spawned the Third Reich. Thus, while Jörg Haider, Jean-Marie Le Pen, Pat Buchanan, and others realize success in politics, the far-right German National Democratic Party (NPD) struggles for political survival. Germany is the only country on earth where "nationalism" is synonymous with "fascism." But nationalism isn't fascism. The nation can be a positive and constructive force, just as it can be destructive and oppressive. Humans are capable of horrible destruction regardless of the ideology used as justification. Germany is faced with this reality every day. The rest of the world blithely ignores it.

WALTER GILDERSLEEVE
Freiburg, Germany

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Himself

CAN YOU REMAIN a human being in Washington?

This is the motivating question of the late Meg Greenfield's posthumously published book, *Washington*. It fascinated her in life: the conundrum of being a hard-assed editorial-page editor at *The Washington Post* and, at the same time, a person who had to look at herself in the mirror each morning. It's something most opinion journalists and political reporters have to grapple with at some point. And it's something central, I think, to the difficulty we're having getting a grip on George W. Bush's early success. We prefer to view public figures through their policies or in crude, personal terms. W. is easily cast as a right-wing extremist—and dumb, incurious, and callow to boot. Bill Clinton was a liberal sociopath (oops), a liar and philanderer, a sharp mind with a mortally damaged psyche. Richard Nixon was, well, you name it.

Only occasionally do we let our guard down in journalism and see an actual human being in public life. Greenfield remembers the scene the day Nixon resigned and gave a tearful address to his staff, bringing up throat-catching memories of his mother and father. At the triumphant *Washington Post*, this was greeted as yet another piece of Nixonian trickery: "'Did you hear that performance? Would you believe he's still trying that stuff? Yecch!'" But Greenfield, no Nixon fan, saw something else: "[I]t seemed to me most natural that at a moment of such unendurable shame, one's thoughts would go back to one's parents, to one's anxieties about how they would view the spectacle, to indirect pleas for their forbearance and love." And, as she listened to her colleagues' glib dismissal, she rightly "thought this reaction said something not about Nixon, but about us."

And yet a healthy skepticism about public figures is also central to the task of keeping Washington honest. There is selfishness in everything—and spin and image-making operate even in the most poignant of moments if you live in the public eye. For that matter, we are all prone to little efforts at self-aggrandizement in private life as well—the white lie, the name-drop, the satisfied glance at oneself in the mirror at a restaurant. In one of her more candid passages, Greenfield sees this process even in herself as a child: "To my own eternal discomfort, I can even remember . . . being for a time entranced by the mystery and romance I believed had accrued to my own image in the eyes of my classmates as a result of my mother's death when I was eleven. I felt ashamed of this, but a stirring picture of myself would nevertheless flicker in and out of the shadows at the edge of my grief."

Hobbes saw honor—i.e., ego—as the motivating principle of human striving, and Greenfield saw his point. Anyone who has dealt with "yet another hassle (they are unending) with some Washington big shot over what the tiny, three-line identification of him at the bottom of a *Washington Post* op-ed article he has written will say" knows what she meant. That's why she treasured those moments when a child or a parent of one of those big shots occasionally reduced the puffed-up pol to a pool of familial fear. Only Rose Kennedy could have cut off Teddy in the middle of a pompous after-dinner toast with the immortal hiss: "*Teddy, the coffee should have been served by now.*"

If you live long enough in this city of a thousand high school class presidents and hall monitors, you live for those moments. And one of the truly dreadful aspects of the "permanent campaign" and the press game of catching politicians in minor gaffes or failings is that such honesty has become even more politically lethal. So the pols have to pretend constantly that they are what they are not—a process that can reduce good people to paranoid ciphers. As Greenfield puts it, the attempt to live up to demands for public perfection is "like never being able to get undressed. People who take this course will become increasingly lifeless."

Thirty years ago, Clinton would never have had a sex scandal. We would never have reported it. A good thing? Perhaps. It strikes me as relevant that the turning point in the Lewinsky saga was the broadcasting of Clinton's deposition, an image of an actual human being humiliated for hours on end. It was then that we realized we had gone too far—but look how far down the path we had already gone. I'm not saying Clinton's behavior and perjury or acquiescence in the spin were excusable. I am saying that at some point we forgot he was human too. That was a mistake—and not just in personal terms. It led many of us to underestimate Clinton's political durability.

Which brings me to Bush's early popularity as president. The press has done its best to caricature him as a clueless, arsenic-wielding buffoon. But he stands apart from the rest of this city primarily because of his ordinariness. He was never a high school class president or a hall monitor. He is, in many ways, the accidental president. And because of this, in striking contrast to his predecessor, he has retained a strikingly large zone of privacy. He didn't, for example, milk the homecoming of the Hainan detainees, as more professional pols like Reagan or Clinton would have. He banished journalists from a private tour of the Holocaust Memorial Museum, quietly impressing even the liberal press corps with his restraint. He does his job as many other normal people do theirs—professionally and within limits. His first instinct, when a drunk-driving scandal hit him on the eve of the election, was to confer with his daughters—not to call Larry King. His wife is even more impressive on this front. She knows who she is. And she is not, ultimately, a public figure. This new delineation of what is legitimately public takes time to sink in, since it is expressed more by what is absent than by what is unmistakably present. But it is real, and it is a relief. And it is, I think, central to Bush's early success.

Culturally, we have reached the end of the phenomenon of the transparent public person. Reality television is popular because it cuts through the often pretentious artifice we call spin. But it is still a form of theater, since those involved know full well they are being seen. This pseudo-transparency, however, cannot work in politics because the actual human beings in this city are, beneath everything, still human—and there's plenty they rightly do not want seen. Reveal everything, and you end up in Lewinsky-land. Conceal everything, and the job of keeping our politicians honest becomes impossible. So we have embarked on a new form of privacy, ushered in by an unlikely man for unlikely reasons. It cannot have been that easy growing up as former President Bush's son. W. knows firsthand the humiliation and anxiety public life can wreak. So he comes to his job with perhaps more training than we have yet acknowledged and has, for these reasons, already made this city a more humane place. I have no idea what Greenfield would have thought of this new president, and I wouldn't dream of conjecturing. But I have a feeling that, in his determination to have a real life apart from his job, Bush would have had an admirer in Meg. Before, that is, she archly dismembered his politics.

ANDREW SULLIVAN

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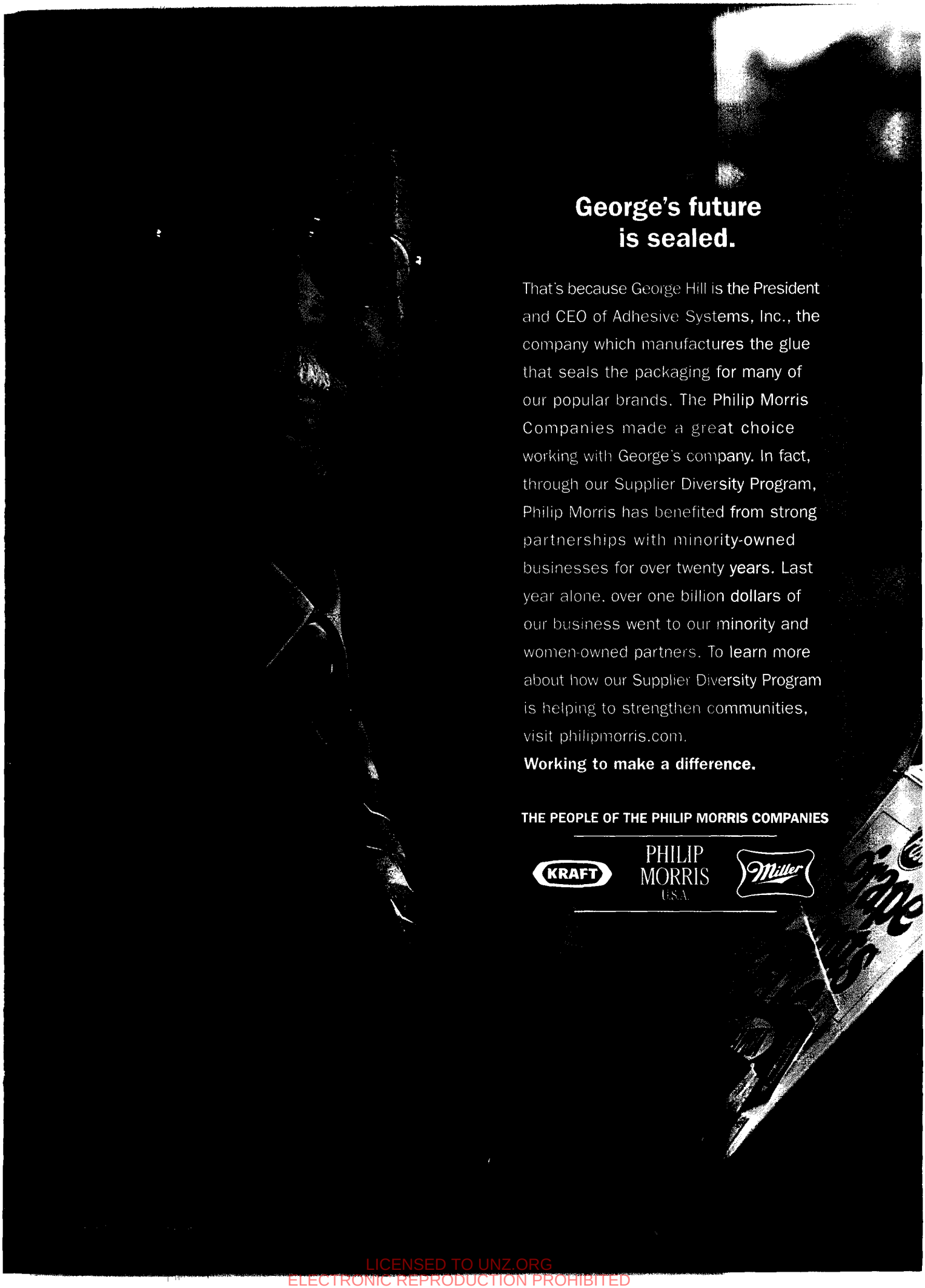

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Spoiled Ballot

REMEMBER ELECTORAL reform? Last November, in the wake of the Florida recount, almost everyone said it was a necessity. Since then, former Presidents Carter and Ford have agreed to chair a blue-ribbon commission on the subject.

Bipartisan bills have been introduced in the House and Senate and in almost every state legislature.

Today, six months after the election, almost nothing has happened. A grand total of one state (Georgia) has reformed its voting procedures. In the U.S. Senate, Mitch McConnell's Rules Committee has yet to hold hearings. In the House, Speaker Dennis Hastert and Minority Leader Richard Gephardt can't even agree on the composition of a select committee. Barely anyone even talks about electoral reform anymore.

What began as a question of good government has fallen victim to partisan combat. The word appears to have gone out within the GOP that electoral reform will disadvantage the party. In Wisconsin and North Carolina, for instance, Republicans have undermined reform by insisting that improvements in voting machinery be coupled with a requirement that voters show special identification at the polls. President Bush provides no money for electoral reform in his fiscal year 2002 budget. But in Washington, at least, Democrats are also playing politics. In the House, Gephardt insisted that Hastert appoint a committee composed equally of Democrats and Republicans. When Hastert proposed a reasonable compromise—a five-to-four Republican majority with a two-thirds requirement for any proposal to be adopted—Gephardt balked. Instead, he relied on a previously appointed Democratic task force headed by conspiracy-obsessed Representative Maxine Waters, who last January participated in a walkout of the House's presidential electoral vote count. There could hardly be a clearer signal that Gephardt and the House Democrats are interested less in passing a bill than in passing blame for inaction onto the Republicans.

In fact, Republican fears and Democratic hopes are baseless. As with its cousin, campaign finance reform, it's impossible to predict how electoral reform would affect the partisan balance—just look at the surprising, contradictory outcome of the various newspaper recounts in Florida.

What we do know is something much more important: Electoral reform would improve the perception and reality of American democracy. Last year's election results in Florida and elsewhere showed that an appalling—and unnecessary—number of citizens had their votes thrown out because of antiquated technology, untrained poll workers, or inept counting procedures. And those citizens were disproportionately poor, uneducated, and nonwhite. In one of Chicago's wealthy lakefront wards, for instance, only 2.5 percent of presidential ballots went uncounted last November; in a poor, predominately black ward of the city, the figure was 12 percent. Rarely are there enough discarded votes to swing elections, but that does not make them any less shameful. By denying the poor and less educated an equal chance to have their votes count, our voting system violates one of our political system's most deeply cherished ideals: However unequal we are in other realms of life, we are equal at the voting booth, equal as democratic citizens under the law.

Passing two simple reforms would go a long way toward making this promise real. First, every county in America needs voting machines that check for overvotes and undervotes when ballots are turned in. After Florida, many politicians made punch-card ballots the villain. But the real problem was the lack of error-checking technology accompanying them. Punch-card ballots that are checked when a voter submits them are, in fact, better than optical-scan ballots that aren't. The second reform is administrative. Voters must be sent sample ballots before the election; the ballots must be easy to understand; and knowledgeable polling officials must be on hand to help confused voters. In Palm Beach and elsewhere, voters repeatedly requested help in decoding confusing ballots, and they repeatedly encountered staff unwilling or unable to help them exercise their franchise.

Several bills that encompass these reforms have already been proposed. The best, sponsored by New York Democratic Senator Charles Schumer and Kansas Republican Senator Sam Brownback, would spend $250 million per year over five years to help states and localities buy new equipment and train poll workers. Electoral reform shouldn't be costly, and it needn't be controversial. All it requires is that our representatives in Congress and in the states rededicate themselves to the proposition that every vote should count. Democracy is waiting. ■

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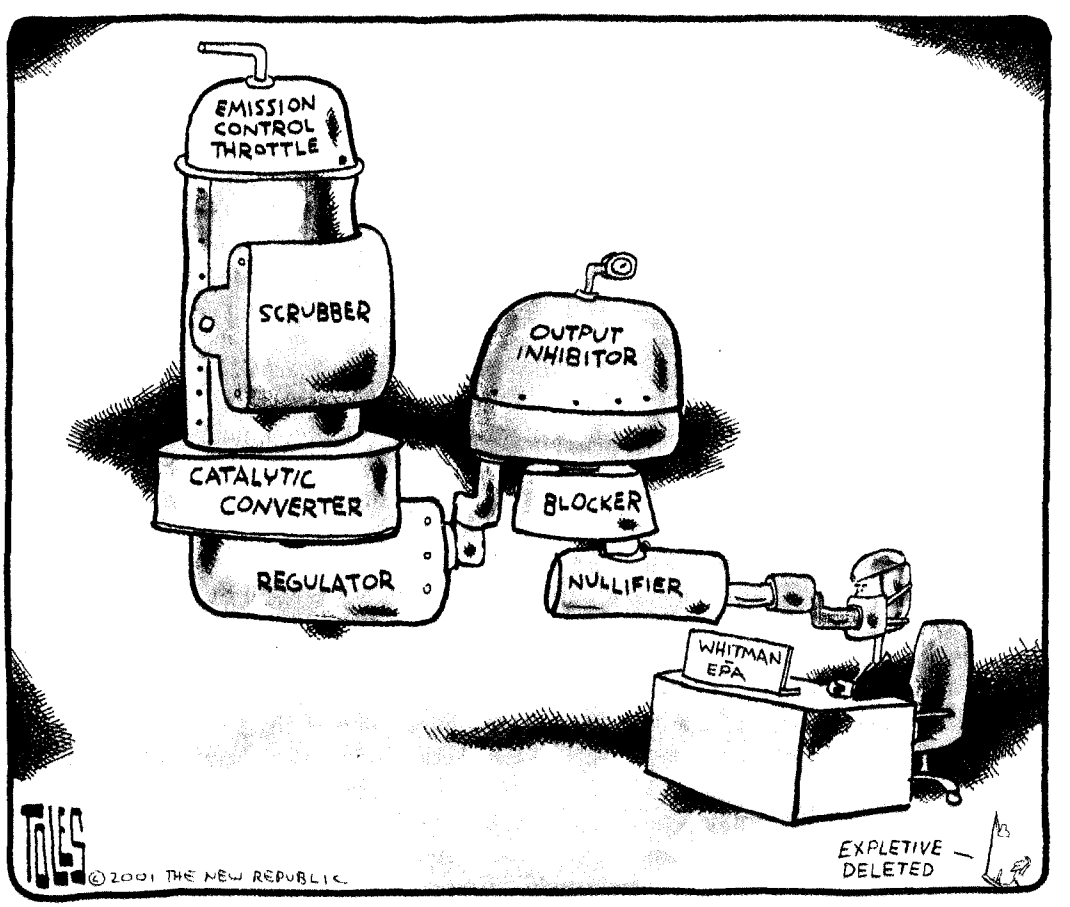
NOTEBOOK

FULL COURT PRESS: In the next few weeks, the White House is expected to release its first batch of judicial nominees to fill the nearly 100 federal court vacancies. The papers describe a manic White House preparing to launch a "nominating blitz." Democrats accuse Republicans of changing the rules governing the Senate confirmation process in order to grease the skids for the president's nominees. The hypocrisy of Republicans, who refused even to give a hearing to dozens of President Clinton's nominees and are now racing to push through their ideological brethren, is obvious enough. But the news that among the administration's top targets are the vacancies on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit is particularly galling. The Fourth Circuit, which hears appeals from Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and South Carolina, is probably the most conservative appeals court in the country, and, during the Clinton administration, Congress—and more specifically, North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms—worked to keep it that way. Helms, still smarting over the fact that his former aide Terry Boyle was nominated but never confirmed during the first Bush administration, single-handedly blocked all four Clinton nominees to fill North Carolina's two Fourth Circuit vacancies. Helms often cited the 1997 Senate testimony of the Fourth Circuit's chief judge, J. Harvie Wilkinson III, who declared that "any increase in the number of judges in the Fourth Circuit will make us a less efficient court than we presently are." Now, however, the White House is reportedly considering at least two judges for the Fourth Circuit: Peter Keisler, a Washington lawyer who clerked for both Robert Bork and Anthony Kennedy, and—you guessed it—Helms's old aide Boyle. No word yet on what impact they'll have on the court's "efficiency."

OOPS!... THEY DID IT AGAIN: Even as they searched for the right way to apologize to China early this month, members of the Bush team let it be known that Beijing would eventually pay a price for seizing the EP-3 crew. Just wait until the crew was back on U.S. soil, they averred. Well, the crew is back, and we're still waiting. In fact, far from paying a price for its execrable conduct, Beijing has reaped a succession of rewards. President Bush can barely contain his eagerness to visit China later this year. And administration officials say they have no intention of either blocking Beijing's Olympics bid or doing anything that might harm our commercial relations with the People's Republic. This week, the Bush team also announced it would deny Taiwan's request for ships equipped with the Aegis radar system. Not to worry, though. The United States would build diesel submarines using plans and parts from Germany or Holland and sell them to Taiwan. Only, as the Germans and the Dutch made clear upon hearing the announcement, the administration never asked for their cooperation, and they don't intend to give it. Finally, Bush told *The Washington Post* this week that while the United States would "reserve the right" to sell arms to Taiwan, "[w]e have made it clear to the Taiwanese that we will not have this so-called annual [weapons sales] review." Canceling "this so-called annual review" ensures that, in the future, U.S. aid to Taiwan will no longer be subject to public scrutiny—and to the pro-Taiwan sentiment in Congress that keeps that aid flowing. There was one positive development, however. The very day the *Post* story ran, Bush told "Good Morning America" that the United States would do "whatever it took to help Taiwan defend herself"—up to and including the commitment of American troops. Alas, this dramatic shift in U.S. policy was apparently unintentional. In subsequent interviews, the president explained that his



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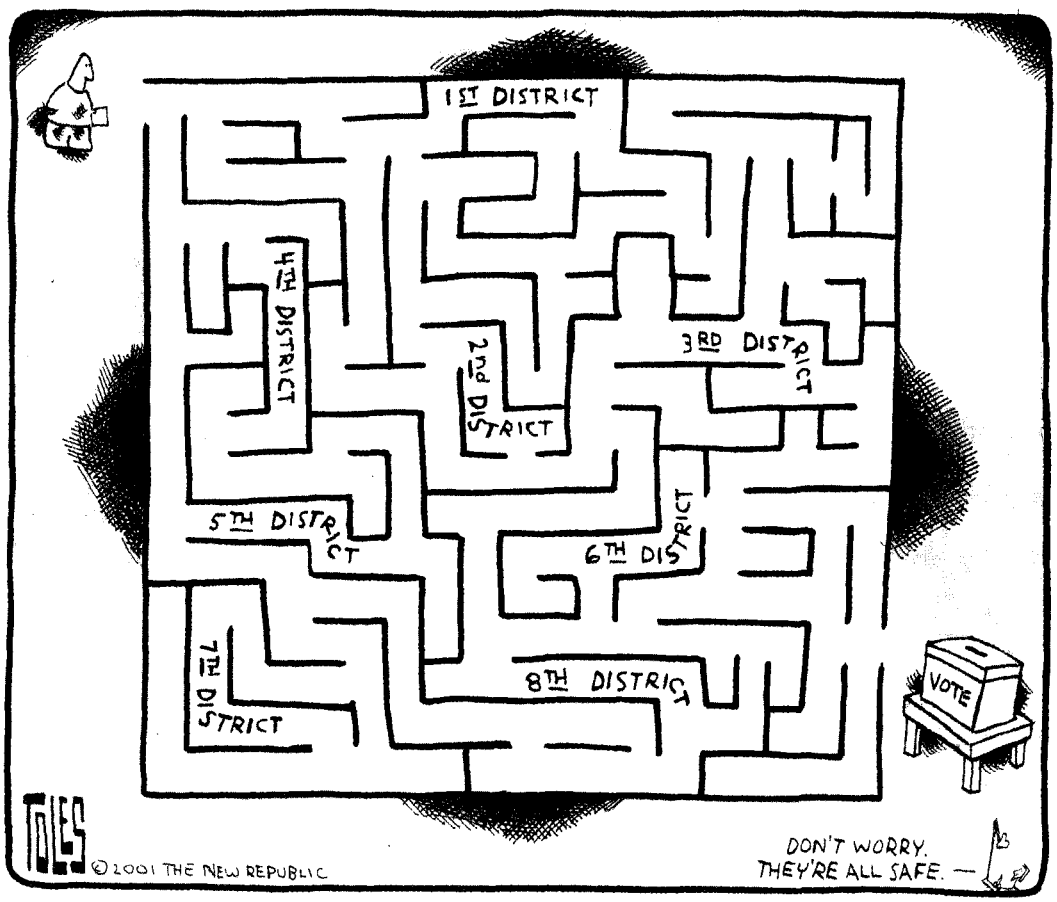
comments represented no change in policy. Sometimes the scandal isn't the gaffe, it's the clarification.

RUNNING WATER: Enviros are already rushing to cash in on George W.'s supposed assault on the environment. The Campaign to Defend America's Environment, a new fund-raising tool formed by several major green groups, debuted this week with full-page newspaper ads asking for contributions because sinister forces are preparing "literally [to] undo the Clean Air Act [and] the Clean Water Act." It's an interesting use of the word "literally," given that, to our knowledge, no one has proposed any such thing. Not to be outdone in the hysteria sweepstakes, 2004 presidential hopeful John Kerry of Massachusetts has announced that the Bush administration "is content to allow one in every 100 Americans with certainty to get cancer from drinking water." Let's be clear: Bush made the wrong decision last month in delaying a reduction in the acceptable level of arsenic in drinking water. But Kerry's assertion is complete blather. First, only about 5 percent of the U.S. population drinks water that contains any arsenic (which usually occurs naturally). Second, Kerry is garbling a National Research Council study that said that *of those exposed*, there was a one in 100 lifetime *chance* of cancer, not a "certainty." Meanwhile, bear in mind that 25 percent of men and women develop cancer regardless of whether they drink tap water or Evian. In the end, danger posed by the old standard works out to a risk so small that a recent joint study by the Brookings Institution and the American Enterprise Institute estimated that putting the strict arsenic standard into effect might save ten lives per year. Ten arsenic-related deaths a year are tragic; unfortunately for Kerry, they're not much of a campaign plank.

FIRST PRINCIPLES: Over the past several weeks, David Horowitz has garnered enormous publicity by taking out ads in college papers denouncing—in the most inflammatory way possible—reparations for descendants of American slaves. The calculated result of what Horowitz calls his "Freedom Tour" is that the newspapers refuse his ad or campus radicals hyperbolically denounce it; in either case, Horowitz then postures as a martyr to the First Amendment. "[T]here's a very important issue at stake here," Horowitz told CNN. "And that is not only my right to say what I want to say ... but to say it without coming under attack with a smear campaign." Unfortunately, this right appears to be less than universal. Last week, Evan Gahr, a columnist for *FrontPage Magazine*, Horowitz's online publication, wrote a piece denouncing conservative activist Paul Weyrich for declaring that "Christ was crucified by the Jews." (Gahr, incidentally, is the only conservative to date who has publicly objected to Weyrich's comments.) Horowitz personally spiked the column. When Gahr had it published on the website of *The American Spectator*, Horowitz fired him, declaring that "his columns are no longer welcome in *FrontPage Magazine*, and ... he owes Paul Weyrich an apology." In items on the site, Horowitz has referred to Gahr as "demented" and accused him of "character assassination" and "malicious slander." Discussing his reparations ads, Horowitz recently told *The Philadelphia Inquirer*: "We live in a time of McCarthyism." Who knew he'd go to such lengths to prove it?



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: The volume number found at the bottom of the table of contents was printed incorrectly in the April 23 and April 30 issues of the magazine. The correct volume number for both is 224, not 225. ■

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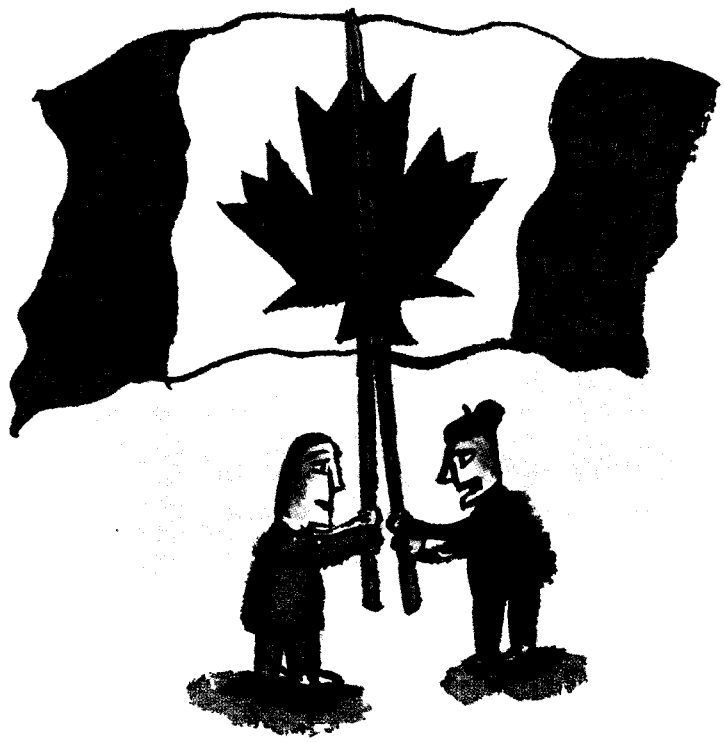
Quebec City Dispatch

Trade Off

By JOSHUA KURLANTZICK

USUALLY, LOCALS DON'T take kindly to straggly demonstrators coming into their city to break windows, strew garbage, and fill the streets with tear gas. Last week, however, some Quebec separatists appreciated the anti-globalization protests that accompanied the Summit of the Americas—so much that they joined in. It's not that they've been seized by outrage over sweatshops in Guatemala or environmental damage in Brazil. But many Quebec nationalists figure that globalization—with its homogenizing threat to local cultures—causes just the kind of backlash upon which movements like theirs depend. In France, after all, fear of globalization has practically made McDonald's-hating a national sport.



ROBERT NEUBECKER

It's a reasonable assumption. But in Quebec, at least, it's almost certainly wrong. In the six years since the province came within a hair's breadth of voting for independence, support for secession has collapsed. Last year, a poll by the research firm Leger and Leger showed that about two-thirds of Quebec residents now want to remain within Canada. And a University of Quebec study presented on the eve of last week's summit revealed that the majority of young immigrants to the province consider themselves Canadians, not Quebecers. Most tellingly, in last fall's national election, the Bloc Québécois, the federal party dedicated to separatism, lost the popular vote in the province. In short, the movement for Quebec independence is practically dead. And globalization has helped kill it.

Six years ago, after the referendum vote that came within a percentage point of authorizing secession, future Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard vowed to revamp Quebec's deficit-laden economy. With a stronger provincial economy, he believed, support for independence would rise as Quebecers realized they could survive fiscally without Canada.

Economically, Bouchard has succeeded. Thanks to years of deficit reduction and solid fiscal planning, Quebec's economy is stronger today than it was in the mid-'90s. Fueled by a high-tech boom, unemployment in Montreal has fallen from 13 percent five years ago to less than 8 percent today. Montreal now boasts a higher percentage of university students than any other city in North America.

Yet politically this rebirth has had an effect exactly opposite to what Bouchard intended. Montreal's growing computer industry has led more and more of its youth to travel to other high-tech clusters across Canada. According to Richard Vengroff, a Canadian politics specialist at the University of Connecticut, this increased exposure has made young Montrealers more tolerant of English Canada and less keen on the separatists' sometimes xenophobic policies. (Just last winter, Yves Michaud, a separatist candidate, downplayed the impact of the Holocaust and referred to the province's Jews as "immigrants.")

What's more, as Canada has inked a raft of free-trade deals and its economic growth has outstripped even America's, many Quebecers have decided that only the federal government in Ottawa has the resources to manage the provinces' complex, globalized economies. On the eve of the summit, a poll by the Ontario-based Center for Research and Information on Canada found that 64 percent of Quebecers believed "a united Canada is better able to meet the challenges of globalization."

And they're probably right. Historically, Quebec has received one of the highest percentages of federal money of any province. That aid is partially responsible for Montreal's tech boom and Quebec's economic resurgence overall. Meanwhile, like all provinces, Quebec benefits from Canada's strong credit rating. Ratings agency Fitch ICBA last month raised Canada's long-term currency debt rating to "AAA+" largely because the threat of Quebec's secession had decreased. Philip Resnick, a professor of political science at the University of British Columbia, says: "In the early 1990s, when twenty percent of people in parts of Quebec were unemployed, people thought separatism couldn't make the economy worse.... Now that things are booming, who wants to leave?"

Quebecers also worry that as an independent province

JOSHUA KURLANTZICK covers trade and international economics for *U.S. News & World Report*.

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Poverty in the Midst of Plenty

Douglass C. North is a senior fellow, Hoover Institution; pencer T. Olin Professor in Arts and Sciences, Vashington University; and a Nobel laureate in economics (1993).

We live in a world where some countries enjoy a material abundance beyond the wildest dreams of our forefathers. Such countries are rich because they are productive. The sources of that productivity—growing markets, technological improvement, and investment in human beings (human capital)—all play an important part in increasing productivity. The new growth economics literature has formalized some of these findings, but economic historians, development economists, and specialists in growth accounting have broadly understood them for some time.

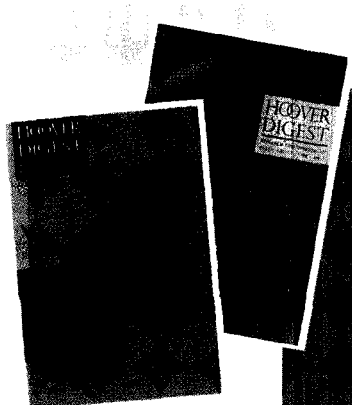
By any standard of measurement much of the world's population is still poor, with individuals subsisting on less than two dollars a day. The disparity between the well-being of the average person in the developed world, where per capita annual income may exceed $20,000, and that in low-income countries such as Haiti or most of sub-Saharan Africa, where it may be under $500 a year, is striking, especially when one sees up close the living conditions associated with such poverty.

How do we account for the persistence of poverty in the midst of plenty? If we know the sources of plenty, why don't poor countries simply adopt policies that make for plenty? The answer is straightforward. We just don't know how to get there. **We must create incentives for people to invest in more efficient technology, increase their skills, and organize efficient markets.** Such incentives are embodied in institutions. Thus we must understand the nature of institutions and how they evolve.

Institutions are the framework that humans create to structure human interaction. They are made up of formal rules (constitutions, laws, and regulations) and informal constraints (conventions and norms of behavior) and the way both are enforced. Well-specified property rights that reward productive and creative activity, a legal system that enforces such laws at low cost, and internal codes of conduct that are complementary to such formal rules are the essential underpinning to productive economies. But well-specified property rights and an effective legal system are the creation of the political structure. Unfortunately, we do not know how to put such a political structure in place. Informal norms of behavior that make for honesty, integrity, and hard work are the product of long-term human interaction; we do not know how to create them in the short run. The result has been that **efforts to improve the performance of poor countries have been something less than a rousing success.** Sub-Saharan Africa remains a basket case, and our efforts to transform the diverse parts of the former Soviet Union into productive economies have so far been a dismal failure. But we are getting a better understanding of the process of political-economic change. The sources of informal constraints such as norms of behavior are a major modern priority in the social sciences and down the road will result in accelerating the reduction of poverty.

— Douglass C. North

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University



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they would lose membership in NAFTA. Over the years, Washington has expressed significant concern about an independent Quebec; during a visit to Canada in 1999, President Clinton delivered a stinging rebuke of separatism while staring repeatedly at Bouchard. When Quebec's economy was relatively isolated, threats from Washington didn't carry much weight. But today Montreal companies sell roughly 40 percent of their goods and services to the United States—twice the percentage they sell to the rest of Canada. Losing NAFTA free-trade privileges would be crushing.

The Canadian government has also moved to ensure that Quebec's greater global integration does not undermine Francophone culture. In the 1970s, separatists feared that immigration to the province would kill the French language. But, in 1977, Quebec passed Law 101, which restricted the use of English in public schools. The federal government has not overturned that law, and today the majority of children of immigrants learn French. As Norman Webster, former editor of the Montreal *Gazette*, has put it, "Francophones increasingly are disassociating the future of their language with the need to separate from Canada." Similarly, while Quebecers once feared that English-language television would overwhelm them, the national Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has actually developed new, higher-quality French programming.

Ottawa, in short, has skillfully used globalization to suck the wind out of Quebec's nationalism. The movement is not entirely dead, but, as Vengroff puts it, "[f]or now, the separatist argument will be about using the threatened potential for independence to serve Quebec's interests in Ottawa, to extract more from the federal government." The province's hard-liners can try to ride the wave of anti-globalization sentiment that is supposedly causing people the world over to rise up in militant defense of their local traditions. But most Quebecers don't appear to be in a militant mood at all. Instead, they seem prosperous, cosmopolitan, and—more than anyone would have predicted several years ago—Canadian. ■

Jerusalem Dispatch

Identity Crisis

By YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI

IN ISRAEL, SPRING is a season of mourning and celebration that exposes the abyss between Israel's Arabs and Jews. The season begins a week after Passover with Holocaust Memorial Day, continues through Remembrance Day for the nation's fallen soldiers, and culminates with Independence Day. For Jews, the trajectory is from annihilation to resistance to rebirth; for Arabs, it moves in the opposite direction, culminating in national defeat.

But the distance has never felt as great as it does this spring, with Israel on the verge of war. Abroad, the press reports the chaos on Israel's periphery. At home, people worry as much about the potential chaos inside.

Since last October's riots, when police killed 13 Arab citizens, the minimal trust that connected Israel's Arabs and Jews has collapsed. Arabs see the killings as proof that the Jewish state considers them enemies rather than citizens; Jews regard the readiness of Arab Israelis to join in Palestinian violence as proof that they aren't a loyal minority but part of a hostile regional majority. Both sides increasingly dismiss the very identity "Arab Israeli" as an oxymoron. When, during the election campaign, Ariel Sharon dryly noted that Israel's one million Arabs are in fact Palestinian, almost no one paid attention.

Indeed, most of the Knesset's 13 Arab members now function as a psychological fifth column, openly backing Israel's enemies. After Israel's retaliatory attack against a Syrian radar station in Lebanon last week, in which three Syrian soldiers were killed, Knesset member Abdulmalik Dehamshe sent a condolence letter to President Bashar al-Assad and listed his return address as "Nazareth, Palestine." Another Knesset member, Azmi Bashara, flew to Damascus and appeared on Syrian television, urging Arab steadfastness against Israel. The Jewish backlash against such actions is on display daily in the letters sections of the newspapers, which have become repositories of rage against Arab Israelis. "If the [Arab] minority wants an anti-Zionist state, holy war, terrorism and a flag with a crescent," reads a recent letter to *Ma'ariv*, "it should choose one of the Arab states that surround us."

ON REMEMBRANCE DAY, Saleh Tarif, a member of the Druse minority and Israel's first-ever Arab Cabinet minister, represented the government at a ceremony in a Druse military cemetery in the Galilee. Standing before a crowd of mourners and identical rows of flat white stones engraved with names in Hebrew and Arabic, he recalled the security contribution of the Druse, the only Arabs drafted into the Israeli army. Tarif himself is a former paratrooper, and his leg still contains shrapnel from the Lebanon war. He tried to express his ambivalence toward the state he served. "We are proud to be citizens of Israel," he declared. "But I still can't report to you that equal opportunity exists between Druse and Jews. Or equal rights. Or equal treatment by the government." He added, "We are fed up."

In this volatile environment, Tarif presents a dual challenge—to Jewish obtuseness and Arab self-righteousness. His primary strategy for defusing the rising tension is a massive infusion of government funding into the Arab sector to redress decades of institutionalized discrimination and neglect. Prime Minister Sharon has just allocated about $50 million for affirmative action programs—a good beginning, says Tarif, but still far short of the four-year, $1 billion plan Ehud Barak promised. Tarif is even lobbying his fellow ministers to set aside part of their budgets for the effort. And he's calling on the education ministry to institute mandatory Arabic instruction in Jewish schools.

In return, Tarif, who's been a Labor Party Knesset member since 1991, hopes Arab Israelis will find their national iden-

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tity by aligning with the Zionist left—just as another outsider community, ultra-Orthodox Jews, have found their place in an alliance with the nationalist right. Virtually alone among the Knesset's Arab members, he opposes confusing the Arab struggle for equal rights with a challenge to the state's Jewish identity. Only by avoiding incitement of Jewish fears, he argues, will Arabs shame Jews into ending discrimination. He believes that those Arab Israelis who call themselves "Palestinian citizens of Israel" undermine their own moral cause by reducing their Israeliness to a technicality. "You can't deny [our] deep solidarity with the Palestinians," he says. "But I am an Israeli, not a Palestinian."

Yet the 47-year-old Tarif is no court Arab. During a 1997 visit to Syria as part of an Arab Israeli delegation, he exclaimed that he was "in love" with Hafez al-Assad. He has called for pulling Druse soldiers out of Gaza, expressed solidarity with the intifada, and blamed Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount for the recent Palestinian violence. At official gatherings he won't sing the national anthem—because, he says, its invocation of a "Jewish soul" implicitly excludes non-Jewish Israelis. He'd be "proud," though, "to sing about the Israeli soul."

Tarif can name the precise moment when he became an Israeli-by-choice. In 1982, one of his closest friends, a Jewish paratrooper named Yossi Tal, was killed in Lebanon, and Tarif went to pay a condolence call to the family. "It was an awesome moment," he says. "Here I am, their son's friend, coming to cry with them. Family members hugged me; it tore my soul." Admitted into the nation's most intimate experience, Tarif emerged an Israeli.

But that transformation only made his encounter with official discrimination that much more devastating. After leaving the army, he was elected head of the council of the Druse village of Julis. "I tried to fight discrimination in funding Druse councils, but I was met by a cold wind. In uniform, no one cared about my Arabic name. But now suddenly my name mattered."

Though Tarif says he represents all Arab Israelis, he owes his appointment to the fact that he is Druse. Sharon insisted that the first Arab Cabinet minister be a Druse, in an effort to reward the community for its patriotism and send a signal to other Arab Israelis that loyalty pays. "If not for Sharon," says Tarif, "it's doubtful whether the Labor Party would have voted for me" to be a minister without portfolio in the unity government.

Still, relations with Sharon are ambivalent. At his first meeting as prime minister with Arab Knesset members, Sharon pointedly excluded Tarif, who'd just repeated on Israeli television that Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount constituted a "desecration." Tarif later apologized, and Sharon declared the feud over.

But their truce is a rare exception in the increasingly bitter war of words between Israel's Arab and Jewish leaders. More typical was a political talk show on which Tarif recently appeared with other Knesset members to debate Israeli identity. Ahmed Tibi, a former adviser to Yasir Arafat, defended his parliamentary bill to declare Arab Israelis an autonomous community, while Tommy Lapid, head of the secular Shinui Party, countered with his bill to officially declare Israel a Jewish state. Tibi called Lapid "a little racist," and Lapid retaliated by chanting, "Enemy, enemy, enemy." While Tarif sat in silence, the other half-dozen panelists shouted at each other simultaneously—the Israeli version of a talk show.

Finally, the moderator invited Tarif to speak. Turning to "my good friend Ahmed Tibi," Tarif said, "Instead of dealing with problems like unemployment, you're bringing populist bills that frighten the Jewish majority." Then he turned to his friend Lapid: "Tommy, why is your bill necessary? There are already so many laws that make this country a Jewish state. Why antagonize a million [Arab] citizens?" It was Tarif's implicit blueprint for coexistence: Arab prudence, Jewish forbearance.

For a moment it seemed Tarif's moderation would prevail. But then Tibi attacked Tarif for remaining in the Labor Party, which perpetuated discrimination against Arabs. A right-wing Knesset member labeled Tibi an "Arafat collaborator." Lapid began shouting with an ultra-Orthodox politician over democracy and religion. Tarif reverted to silence and quickly gulped down a glass of water, as if trying to douse a fire. ■

The problem with black America's best hope.

Right Reverend?

By FRANKLIN FOER

THE REVEREND EUGENE RIVERS pokes a finger into my chest. "Now, listen. This is some deep stuff." From the pocket of his gray double-breasted suit, he removes a folded, slightly frayed memo he later calls the "Master Plan." Handing me the document, he scans the lobby of the National Press Club for eavesdroppers, then crowds even closer. "Doc, here's the best part. Nobody's written about this. They don't have a clue."

I unfold the Master Plan and begin skimming. Rivers peers over my shoulder and uses his finger to underline the juiciest sentences. In precise detail, the Master Plan describes a strategy for creating black versions of various elite institutions—the Trilateral Commission, the Council on

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Foreign Relations, the Salzburg Seminar, and the Bilderberg Group are among Rivers's favorites. ("Oh, yeah, I know the game," he tells me.) Rivers goes on to describe how he'll obtain the Vatican's financing for black Pentecostal evangelizing in Africa. ("They need a Negro face.") He explains his goal of provoking a political realignment by forging a new coalition of blacks and Catholics. The more Rivers talks, the more extravagant the Master Plan becomes. ("Oh, yeah, it's *Godfather III* meets *Wag the Dog*.")

At the heart of Rivers's grandiose agenda is a simpler one: He wants to depose Jesse Jackson, the Congressional Black Caucus, and other practitioners of what he calls "Shaka Zulu politics." As one of his friends puts it, "He's campaigning to be president of black America." At first glance, it seems about as likely as his other ideas. After all, Rivers's church, housed in a refurbished Boston crack den, consists of fewer than 30 families. He has no radio show or newspaper column and receives only erratic financing from liberal moneybags.

But Rivers does have one thing going for him: His message fits the moment. Recent revelations about Jesse Jackson's malfeasance have borne out his critique of the corrupt "civil rights industry." Following the NAACP's hefty investment in Al Gore's failed presidential bid, swaths of the black political elite have begun echoing Rivers's long-standing opposition to putting all the community's eggs in the Democratic basket. And Rivers's vision of the government subsidizing the work of black churches has won a following at the highest levels of the Bush administration, which hired one of his closest allies to run the new Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

MORE THAN AT any time in the last generation, black America is open to ideological alternatives. And Rivers's are the most compelling around. He borrows heavily from neoconservative sociology, attributing the "underclass" to "ghetto pathologies" rather than dwelling on racism. "The people who dismissed [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan's finding on the black family were idiots," he tells me. When I ask him to name the root causes of black poverty, he cites sexual immorality, the decline of the church, and crime.

But, unlike black conservatives, he grapples with the ghetto's economic roots as well. In fact, when he moves from culture to economics, he sounds like a harder-edged William Julius Wilson. He accuses the civil rights establishment of betraying and ignoring the black poor. Rather than persecute picayune transgressions of political correctness and isolated instances of police brutality, he wants black leaders to develop a race-neutral, social democratic program of job training and urban reinvestment.

And, lest this synthesis of conservative moralism and ghetto solidarity resemble the crude nationalism of the Nation of Islam, Rivers tempers his views with a healthy dose of liberalism. Dismissing Louis Farrakhan's cadre as "all demagoguery, uniforms, bow ties, and theater," Rivers goes out of his way to cheer "cosmopolitan elites" and chides the "intellectually moribund" black establishment for its "essentialist" view of race.

In fact, there's only one problem with Rivers's sophisticated fusion of conservative, radical, and liberal ideas: Rivers himself. His message may be vastly preferable to those of his leading rivals to succeed Jackson—Kweisi Mfume, Farrakhan, Al Sharpton—but his personality gets in the way. He has a long history of reckless rants and fruitless confrontation—often directed at people who share his views. In fact, in a sad irony, the man who spends much of his time slamming black political leaders for being out of touch is in danger of excommunicating himself from the very community he hopes to lead.

IF RIVERS'S MISHMASH of political views doesn't fit neatly into any ideological container, that's because it's not an ideology. It's a theology—or, more specifically, Pentecostalism. Born in 1906 as an explicit response to the moral depredations of modernism, Darwinism, and the Social Gospel movement, Pentecostalism has been, from the beginning, both sternly moralistic and proudly proletarian. In contrast to the black Baptist church, with its bourgeois aspirations, the Pentecostals operated out of storefronts. They believed that the holy spirit would be redeemed through the meekest of the meek—the prostitutes, the impoverished, the fatherless. "To be Pentecostal," says Rivers, "is to identify with the blackest and the poorest.... It's the worldview of the wretched of the earth."

Rivers made an unlikely Pentecostal. His family had strong roots in the middle class, with three of Rivers's relatives boasting college degrees. Not only was Rivers's father not Pentecostal, he wasn't even Christian. Eugene F. Rivers II was a convert to the Nation of Islam and worked on the staff of its publications. But, despite the Nation's puritanical admonitions, he abandoned his wife and children in 1953. Left without a breadwinner, the Rivers family tumbled, moving from Chicago to the Philadelphia ghetto, where young Eugene began a lifelong cycle of sin and redemption. At age ten, according to a superb *Boston Magazine* profile, he attended his first orgy. Two years later, he succumbed to threats and pressure and joined a street gang.

One day, at age 13, while hiding from a neighborhood bully, Rivers heard a Billy Graham crusade on the radio and found God. But, rather than join his mother's Baptist church, he followed a friend and turned Pentecostal. The denomination's appeal wasn't entirely spiritual: The preacher's focus on the poor jibed perfectly with Philadelphia's black politics, circa 1969. Few other cities had so much black nationalist fervor (e.g., Mumia Abu-Jamal or MOVE). Rivers admired the Black Panthers and imbibed their disdain for the "pigs" in the bourgeoisie. So, upon his spiritual awakening, Rivers concocted an idiosyncratic alchemy of Christ and Huey Newton. And it worked for a while—until 1971, when Rivers pronounced his minister insufficiently radical and broke from the church. "I was too black, too nationalist," he told *Boston Magazine*'s Sean Flynn. And later he abandoned the Panthers as well, turning away from their crazy schemes and overheated rhetoric. "That shit was too violent," he says now.

In 1973 a friend invited Rivers to New Haven. On the visit, Rivers sneaked into lectures at Yale. "It was eye-opening and exhilarating," he says. Within weeks, he began attending

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classes, writing papers, and acing exams—despite the fact that he was not enrolled. To subsidize his new academic life, he set up a full-service hustling operation. "I'd charge Puerto Rican kids to write papers," he recalls. To supplement that income, he cashed welfare checks in three cities and sold marijuana at inflated prices to credulous white kids.

For middle-class black students at Yale, Rivers became a figure of fascination—an authentic avatar of the street. One of those students, the blaxploitation director Warrington Hudlin, worshipfully recalls, "He didn't have anything to eat. He survived because of mother wit, hustle, and his discipline. It embarrassed you." As part of his senior thesis, Hudlin turned Rivers's exploits into a documentary called *Black at Yale*. The film tracked Rivers's dramatic tale of infiltrating the Ivy League. It also tracked his ideas. Just like the Panthers and Pentecostals, Rivers made it his mission to upbraid privileged black kids for selling out their people. "He was always screaming at people for having fun while poor people in the community suffered," says Hudlin.

Rivers eventually decided to go straight, putting hustling behind him and officially applying to Yale. When the university rejected him, his life again fell to pieces. He returned to Philly, started a family, then left it. Later, he was arrested for shoplifting books from the Harvard Coop. Once again, religion halted his descent into sin. In the late '70s, Rivers returned to the Pentecostalism of his youth, moving into one of Boston's poorest neighborhoods and becoming a devoted volunteer at a food pantry. And he successfully applied to Harvard.

A 29-YEAR-OLD freshman with a criminal record and a documentary devoted to him, Rivers became an instant campus celebrity. On one of the first nights of school, a black student group showed Hudlin's film. Soon after, *The Harvard Crimson* published a lengthy profile of Rivers. He leveraged this notoriety, preaching to Christian student groups and founding the William J. Seymour Society, an organization for black Pentecostal students. Named for Pentecostalism's founder, a burly sidewalk preacher with one eye, the Seymour Society might have been called the Eugene F. Rivers III Society. Every Saturday, Rivers led the Seymour students in discussion of his favorite theoretical and theological texts—Chomsky, Marcuse, Catholic social teaching. They listened to his sermons about the moral failings of middle-class blacks. They followed him into the ghetto to volunteer at the food bank. And, over time, they began criticizing black student leaders on campus. Rivers picketed a student cabaret commemorating Malcolm X, handing out a flyer that screamed, "While they party, we die!"

In 1983, after three years, Rivers dropped out of Harvard to take his crusade into the ghetto full-time. The Seymour Society students joined his new church, the Azusa Christian Community, and continued its campaign against black middle-class apathy. This time, Rivers went after Boston's black ministers, attacking them for living in the suburbs and neglecting the inner city. And he got his criticisms picked up by *The Boston Globe*.

Meanwhile, in the drug-infested Four Corners section of Dorchester where he lived, Rivers found his Pentecostal moralism merging with neoconservative sociology. The overriding problem of the ghetto, he concluded, wasn't white racism; it was black crime. After years of being denounced as "racist pigs," the police had been rendered virtually useless in his neighborhood. So Rivers took it upon himself to rehabilitate them, organizing black clergy (many of whom he had attacked previously) to accompany police on visits to the homes and schools of potential gangsters. "It changed the entire course of racial dialogue and policing in the city," says Harvard sociologist Christopher Winship, who has studied Rivers's work. For the first time in years, the police began earning a measure of respect in the inner city. After years of steady rise, Boston's murder rate plummeted.

The network of ministers Rivers had assembled called itself the Ten Point Coalition, and its success launched Rivers onto the national stage. His stern face was plastered across the cover of *Newsweek* atop the banner "GOD VERSUS THE GANGS." A fawning profile appeared in *The New Yorker*. Using

ERIC PALMA

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his newfangled fame, Rivers took up his old Seymour Society battles with unprecedented fury. The black students he'd known at Harvard and Yale—Cornel West and Lani Guinier among them—were now professors, and Rivers renewed his attacks on them. These beneficiaries of affirmative action, Rivers argued, were not repaying their debt to the black community but instead focusing on narcissistic cultural criticism divorced from black experience. Rivers called America's premier black academics the "niggerati" and dubbed Harvard's prestigious African American studies program the "Cotton Club on the Charles."

The critique contained essential truths, but the over-the-top, highly personal attacks led some to suspect Rivers was motivated less by ideology than by ambition. "It was always all about Gene," says one of his former friends. Geralyn White Dreyfous, a former Harvard administrator who helped Rivers solicit foundation money, recounts, "His ego had become too much. I remember that he would get immensely jealous when any other minister got quoted by reporters."

During a 1994 press conference announcing a partnership between a union local and the Ten Point Coalition, Rivers took the microphone and accused the NAACP of letting down its constituents and ignoring churches. "Politically, the black secular leadership for too long has taken the black church for granted, and today the political chickens have come home to roost," he proclaimed. Never mind that the ostensible subject of the conference was housing loans. The other ministers in the Ten Point Coalition, some of them Seymour Society alumni, sent *The Boston Globe* a letter disavowing Rivers's comments. In conversations with reporters, they downplayed his claims. "We had to work with those people," one of the ministers later recounted. It was an event repeated again and again—Rivers would fulminate, his colleagues would apologize on his behalf—until the other ministers finally asked him to leave the Ten Point Coalition's board. "There are two sides to Gene," says one minister who worked with Rivers. "He's brilliant, witty, and has a lot of insight and a real concern for people. Then there's a second side that is vicious, self-promoting, and somewhat dishonest. He was asked to leave the Ten Point Coalition because certain ethical barriers were crossed. Too many times, he misrepresented the organization's positions in the press."

RIVERS SURVIVED THE setback by making a brash calculation. Having failed to sustain a local following, he set out to win a national one—largely by courting the media. The day I stopped by his office, I watched as he spun reporters from *The Boston Globe* and *The New York Times*, importuning them to write stories about George W. Bush's faith-based initiative, run by Rivers's buddy John DiIulio. Within minutes of greeting reporters, he creates an impression of intimacy. And he's an expert at doling out scoops and brash quotes. A year before the story of Jackson's illegitimate child broke in the *National Enquirer*, Rivers was telling it to reporters. He has shown up unannounced at the *Globe* newsroom to schmooze. When he wanted to land a story in *Newsweek*, he trekked to New York to lobby editor Mark Whitaker.

When not courting the media, Rivers travels around the country, advocating his approach to crime prevention and building a network of sympathetic ministers. When I met him in Washington, he'd just flown from meetings in Tulsa and Knoxville. And if Rivers has a shot at building a real national base—as opposed to a public relations one—it's through the church. While the black Baptist church—from which Jackson, Sharpton, and Mfume hail—is dwindling, Rivers's brand of Pentecostalism is booming. The denomination, long confined to poor storefronts, is now acquiring a middle-class following. Pentacostalist mega-churches increasingly crowd suburbs. One of Rivers's closest allies, Bishop Charles Blake, runs a Los Angeles church with 18,000 members—including Magic Johnson, Angela Bassett, and Stevie Wonder.

Because of their roots in Pentecostalism, Rivers's attacks on the civil rights establishment have an authenticity that black conservative critiques rarely do. His social conservatism, for instance, flows naturally from the church's support for school prayer and opposition to gay rights. In a way, so does his flirtation with the Bush administration. Pentecostals are generally nonpartisan; most even sat out the Baptist-dominated civil rights movement. "Pentecostals like Rivers have an instrumental view of the parties," says University of Chicago sociologist Omar McRoberts. "Like other worldly institutions, they don't believe that the Democratic Party should be the recipient of undying support."

IN RECENT WEEKS, as it has become clear that Sharpton is poised to inherit Jackson's mantle as black America's most high-profile leader, Rivers's message has grown all the more essential. The problem is that before he can overcome Sharpton, Rivers has to overcome himself. And the egotism and personal vitriol that prompted his expulsion from the Ten Point Coalition seem as prevalent as ever. Within hours of my meeting Rivers, he called the Reverend Walter Fauntroy, a fellow proponent of the faith-based initiative, a "leech" and a "bozo." The Reverend Jim Wallis, another of his partners, is a "pain in the neck" and a "white liberal flake." Later, sitting in his office, he began to gossip about Cornel West's divorce and the Harvard professor's newly purchased mansion.

Such potshots make great copy—especially since black leaders are famously loath to publicly criticize one another on the record. Indeed, they're a big part of the reason Rivers has become a media star. But they're also the reason he's alienated so many potential supporters in the black community. Rivers, whose central critique of the black political class is its lack of authentic connection to the African American street, may well find that his largest remaining constituency is the least authentic one of all: the white press.

Last month, I drove to the White House with Rivers so he could meet with his longtime ally and associate pastor Mark Scott, whom DiIulio brought in to help with the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. At the White House, the car pulled over and Rivers tried to phone Scott. But there was no answer, and it gradually became clear Rivers didn't have an appointment. He left a voice mail message, sighed, and sarcastically muttered, "God bless him." At the doors to power—once again, so close—Rivers has been turned away. ■

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Are Bob Torricelli's fellow senators happy to see him go?

Clubbed

By JASON ZENGERLE

WHEN WRITING A story about a politician, it is standard practice to solicit quotes from that politician's friends. This is usually quite easy to do—unless, of course, that politician has no friends. When I told New Jersey Senator Bob Torricelli's press secretary, Debra DeShong, that I was doing a story on her boss's relationship with his fellow Democrats, she said Torricelli himself wouldn't grant me an interview. But she did suggest I talk to four other senators who, she said, would be more than happy to sing Torricelli's praises: Tom Daschle, Jon Corzine, Ben Nelson, and Debbie Stabenow. I called all four—telling their press secretaries the reason for and genesis of my call—and waited for them to call me back. A few days later, I mentioned to another Torricelli aide that I hadn't heard from any of them. "You haven't?" he said, a hint of nervousness creeping into his voice. He put me on hold and came back a few minutes later, pledging to follow up with some of the original four and suggesting three additional senators: John Breaux, Patty Murray, and Maria Cantwell. I made three more calls and waited for them to be returned. Later, when I mentioned to a third person in the Torricelli orbit that I hadn't heard back from any of the seven senators I'd called at Torricelli's behest, he was incredulous. "[Torricelli] helped get some of these people elected! Let me make some calls and see what I can do," he said and hustled off the phone.

STEVE BRODNER

He had reason to be surprised. The New Jersey senator, by all rights, should be a party hero right now. It was only last November that Torricelli, by raising record-breaking sums of money as chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC), engineered the party's surprise four-seat gain—bringing Democrats to 50-50 parity. In the immediate aftermath of the triumph, Democrats showered Torricelli with gratitude. "I thank him, I celebrate with him," Daschle said the day after the election.

But now the warm words are gone. And just when Torricelli needs them most. For more than two years, the Justice Department's Campaign Financing Task Force has been investigating Torricelli's 1996 Senate campaign; in that time, seven people have pled guilty to making illegal campaign donations. But ever since one of those seven, New Jersey businessman David Chang, began cooperating with prosecutors last year, the investigation has appeared to creep closer to Torricelli himself. In recent months, *The New York Times* and Bergen County *Record* have seemed to carry new revelations nearly every day: "EX-AIDES TO TORRICELLI TESTIFY ABOUT PAY FOR CAMPAIGN WORK"; "FRENCH EX-CONVICT DESCRIBES A PATH INTO TORRICELLI'S CIRCLE"; "INQUIRY OF TORRICELLI EXAMINING CLAIM HE TOOK UNREPORTED GIFTS."

It would be easy to argue that the investigation is out of control—with a metastasizing mandate (what began as a simple campaign finance inquiry has broadened into an investigation of Torricelli's personal finances), heavy-handed prosecutorial tactics, and apparent leaks. And you'd think that, after impeachment, Democrats would be sensitive to runaway investigations. Yet they haven't exactly rallied to Torricelli's defense. When pressed at a recent news conference, the most Daschle could bring himself to say about the man who only months ago he so profusely thanked was: "Senator Torricelli has said these allegations are completely false. And I have no reason not to believe him." Looking for something a little more heartfelt, this week the New Jersey senator took the dramatic step of pleading for his colleagues' support at a closed-door caucus meeting.

One reason for the lack of support may be the New Jersey senator's recent flirtations with the GOP. Since November, Torricelli has strayed from the party line on issues ranging from the Florida recount to John Ashcroft's attorney general nomination to President Bush's tax cut—leading some Democrats to accuse him of disloyalty. "A fifty-fifty Senate," gripes one Senate Democratic staffer, "is no place for a party of one."

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But there's a more personal explanation for the silence greeting Torricelli's plight: Many of his fellow Democrats just don't like him—and they never have. For years they have scorned him as brash, arrogant, sleazy. They may have realized that those qualities would be useful at the head of the DSCC, but while Torricelli took the position thinking it would bring him respectability and power within the Senate club, it has done no such thing. It hasn't even brought him a defense from party elders in his hour of need. Bob Torricelli, who has made a career of using others, has finally been used himself.

EVEN AMONG POLITICIANS, Torricelli's ambition stands out. In 1965, as a 14-year-old in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, he ran for "junior mayor" and won; his father, Salvatore, ran for the real job that same year and lost. Torricelli was elected class president his freshman year at Rutgers University and reelected his sophomore year—only to have his victory subsequently invalidated because of what the Rutgers *Daily Targum* reported at the time as Torricelli's "gross unethical conduct" during the campaign. (A Smith College acquaintance of Torricelli's had allegedly posed as a *Targum* reporter and "interviewed" one of his opponents a few days before the election.) Torricelli was unfazed. "The same back room political ploys that removed me from office last year after being elected won't work this spring," he wrote in a letter to the *Targum* during his sophomore year. "You can mark that as a 'promise.'" Sure enough, Torricelli won the class presidency his junior and senior years. After law school and stints working for New Jersey Governor Brendan Byrne and Vice President Walter Mondale, he ran for Congress in 1982 at the age of 31.

From the moment Torricelli arrived in Washington, it was clear he wasn't content merely representing northern New Jersey. After only a few days in office, he made headlines when he flew to San Salvador to retrieve the corpse of a young journalist from his district who had disappeared two years earlier. It was the first of many trips he'd take to international war zones—with the press in tow. On Capitol Hill, he worked feverishly to become a player in the Democratic Party, doing yeoman's work in defending House Speaker Jim Wright during the ethics investigation that led to Wright's resignation, whipping votes for the leadership, and going on the Sunday shows to argue the party line. "Unlike a lot of people, Bob worked," recalls one former House leadership aide. "He got on the phone and made calls. He'd come to whip meetings with prepared lists. If he said he'd do something, he did it, which isn't always the case."

Still, the respect and influence Torricelli craved proved elusive. In 1990 House Speaker Tom Foley passed him over for the chairmanship of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) in favor of the more senior California Representative Vic Fazio. And in 1994 Al Gore quashed his bid to become chairman of the Democratic National Committee, apparently because Gore worried that Torricelli was too close to Dick Gephardt, then a potential presidential rival. But Torricelli's setbacks didn't stem simply from bad luck; his personality had already begun to grate. While Democrats appreciated his work ethic, the accompanying aggression alienated many. "A lot of this stuff is a popularity contest," says a former House aide. "And being smart and being a very aggressive speaker doesn't always endear you to some of your colleagues."

In 1996 Torricelli won election to the Senate and took his campaign for respectability to the chamber where it matters most. Ever mindful of his lack of pedigree and gravitas, he set out to convince his fellow senators he wasn't some parochial Jersey pol. A few months into his Senate term, he engaged in a high-profile Hamlet act over whether to vote for the balanced-budget amendment, a performance that Jacob Weisberg memorably described in a *Slate.com* article titled "HOW TO APPEAR THOUGHTFUL." In search of highbrow credentials, Torricelli even edited a book on rhetoric, *In Our Own Words: Extraordinary Speeches of the American Century*. "[W]ords don't simply have to chart history, they can change it," he mused to Matt Lauer on the "Today" show.

In late 1998, when Democratic leader Tom Daschle asked him to serve as DSCC chair, it seemed Torricelli's campaign was finally bearing fruit. The DSCC post placed him in the party leadership. More importantly, if he did his job well, his stature would only grow. "[Torricelli] thought the DSCC was going to catapult him into the party's upper echelons," says one former Torricelli staffer. "He thought it was his ticket to being respected, being distinguished."

TORRICELLI THREW HIMSELF into the DSCC job as no one had before. Previous chairmen had come to view the post as more a chore than an honor and did it halfheartedly. Not Torricelli. He raised money tirelessly, vacuuming up a record $103 million during his tenure and beating the Republicans in the soft money category for the first time ever. Torricelli also spent more time than previous chairmen recruiting candidates—prodding, cajoling, and sometimes virtually bludgeoning attractive Democrats into throwing their hats into the ring. After having private conversations with Hillary Clinton about running for the Senate, Torricelli worried that the first lady was wavering. So, before a January 1999 taping of "Meet the Press," Torricelli sidled up to Tim Russert and told the newsman he thought Clinton was going to run. Russert dutifully reported the "little mini bombshell" and began the media frenzy. Says one Democratic aide, "He did it to force her hand."

Most Democrats thought the TAKE BACK THE SENATE banner hanging in the DSCC lobby was little more than a nice slogan. After all, the party only held 46 seats. But Torricelli actually believed he could make it happen. High-profile pols like Clinton or multimillionaire candidates like Corzine in New Jersey and Cantwell in Washington didn't need DSCC money, but they relied on the DSCC for strategic support. "[Torricelli] understands mechanically how to run a race," says one Democratic staffer. "During strategy meetings, he was always the smartest guy in the room." Meanwhile, thanks to the self-financing candidates, the DSCC was able to lavish its record haul on other candidates. On Election Day, while Gore lost and House Democrats again fell short of a majority, Senate Democrats exceeded expectations—gaining four seats and tying the chamber at 50-50.

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The Facts Are In:

- In March 1999, the **National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine** concluded "there are some limited circumstances in which we recommend smoking marijuana for medical purposes." The report noted, "Nausea, appetite loss, pain and anxiety ... all can be mitigated by marijuana." Janet E. Joy, Stanley J. Watson, Jr., and John A Benson, Jr., "Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base," Division of Neuroscience and Behavioral Research, Institute of Medicine (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999).
- "Federal authorities should rescind their prohibition of the medicinal use of marijuana for seriously ill patients and allow physicians to decide which patients to treat." Editorial, ***New England Journal of Medicine***, January 30, 1997.
- Among the organizations that have endorsed medical access to marijuana are: American Academy of Family Physicians; American Bar Association; American Public Health Association; American Society of Addiction Medicine; AIDS Action Council; British Medical Association; California Academy of Family Physicians; California Medical Association; California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church; *Consumer Reports* Magazine; Institute of Medicine; Kaiser Permanente; Lymphoma Foundation of America; Multiple Sclerosis California Action Network; National Association of Attorneys General; National Association of People with AIDS; National Nurses Society on Addictions; New Mexico Nurses Association.

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- Between 1996 and 2000, seven states passed voter initiatives legalizing the medicinal use of cannabis (AZ, CA, ME, OR, WA, NV and AK). These states encompass 20 percent of the population.
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Kevin B. Zeese, President, Common Sense for Drug Policy
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NOT LONG AFTER the November triumph, Torricelli was awarded a prize seat on the Finance Committee. But it didn't take long for his political maneuvering to overwhelm any warm feelings from the party leadership. First, before the presidential election was resolved, Torricelli angered Democrats by publicly suggesting that Gore consider conceding. Then, moments after the Supreme Court ended the Florida recount, Torricelli took to the airwaves to declare, "Clearly, the race for the presidency has come to an end." When most Democrats dug in to do battle with President Bush, Torricelli seemed to bend over backward to accommodate him. He called Ashcroft "a very good choice" for attorney general (before eventually voting against him). He openly flirted with Bush on his tax cut proposal; he invented a "waiver" that would allow Bush to override any tax cut "trigger." ("Torricelli to the rescue," wrote conservative columnist Robert Novak.) And, on campaign finance reform, he gave one of the most impassioned speeches on behalf of the "non-severability" amendment, considered by many reformers to be a poison pill.

Soon the New Jersey senator was a virtual pariah. "When Torricelli stands up and talks in meetings," says one prominent Democrat, "people just look at their feet." Torricelli, who refused to comment for this story, lashed out in a January interview with *The New York Times*: "I will accept criticism of my loyalty to the Democratic Party from anyone who has recruited more candidates, raised more money, or defeated more Republicans." But what Torricelli didn't grasp was that loyalty wasn't the problem; it was personality. For many Democratic senators, the defining Torricelli moment came at a closed-door caucus meeting in 1999, when a long-simmering feud between him and New Jersey's then-senior Senator Frank Lautenberg boiled to the surface. After Lautenberg chided Torricelli for telling a reporter he felt closer to New Jersey's Republican Governor Christie Todd Whitman than he did to Lautenberg, Torricelli erupted. "You're a fucking piece of shit," he yelled, "and I'm going to cut your balls off!" It wasn't the sort of performance that goes over well in the decorous halls of the Senate.

Torricelli had thought his success at the DSCC would change his image. But his aggressive, shameless fund-raising had actually ratified it. "He was never a well-liked guy, so that's not new," one high-ranking Senate Democratic staffer explains when I ask him about Torricelli's current unpopularity. "The only thing that's new is, now that he's no longer at the DSCC, people don't have to pretend that they like him." In effect, Torricelli's fellow senators used him. "He was something like a bad medicine," says one prominent Democrat about the decision to install Torricelli at the DSCC. "It's going to cure your problem, but there's an awful taste associated with it." And once the problem was cured, no one wanted the foul-tasting medicine around.

Granted, it's hard to feel too sorry for Torricelli. After all, Democrats are only doing to him what he's done to others. Just ask David Chang. A mere five years ago, the man Torricelli's lawyer now brands a "pathological liar" served on the finance committee of Torricelli's Senate campaign, donating and raising money. (And, after Torricelli took over at the DSCC in 1998, Chang gave tens of thousands of dollars to other Democrats, many of them, Chang has reportedly told investigators, at Torricelli's request.) According to an April 22 article in *The New York Times*, Torricelli apparently returned the favors by trying to grease the skids for Chang's efforts to buy a South Korean life insurance company.

Alas, in his eagerness to help Torricelli, Chang cut a few corners, and federal prosecutors eventually figured it out. In December 1999 they arrested Chang, eventually charging him with obstruction of justice, soliciting perjury, and making illegal campaign contributions. Initially Chang, represented by Torricelli fund-raiser Michael Critchley, contested the charges and refused to cooperate with prosecutors; through a spokesperson, Torricelli called Chang "a supporter and a friend." But Chang later dismissed Critchley; in June 2000 he pled guilty to illegally donating more than $50,000 to the Torricelli campaign and began cooperating with prosecutors. He told the feds that Torricelli was aware of and even encouraged him to make some of his illegal donations; that Torricelli suggested he leave the country until the investigation ended; and, according to an article in last week's *New York Times*, that he gave Torricelli tens of thousands of dollars in cash and gifts. Torricelli has denied all the charges and attacked Chang's character. "Almost anything of consequence that passes through David Chang's lips is wrong, is false," Torricelli's lawyer, Robert F. Bauer, told the *Times* earlier this year. Last week, in response to the latest *Times* story, Torricelli told a hastily assembled news conference in Newark, "David Chang is every elected official's worst nightmare."

Chang isn't Torricelli's only erstwhile friend these days. A French businessman (and onetime international fugitive) named Philippe V. Hababou is in the same boat. Like Chang, Hababou raised money for Torricelli and served on his campaign's finance committee. Like Chang, Hababou later pled guilty to making illegal donations to the Torricelli campaign. And, like Chang, he is cooperating with prosecutors. So far Hababou has reportedly implicated a Torricelli campaign aide in the illegal donations, and alleged that Torricelli violated the regulations on a blind trust by instructing its director to buy stocks that Hababou had recommended. "We are not going to dignify the comments of a fugitive and convicted felon like Mr. Hababou by engaging in a debate with him," a Torricelli spokesman told the *Times*.

WERE TORRICELLI'S CAMPAIGN finance practices sleazy? Yes. Were they qualitatively different from those of many of his colleagues? Probably not. The realities of today's campaign finance system mean all politicians chase campaign contributions, inevitably cozying up to some less-than-respectable people in the hunt. Hawaiian Senator Daniel Inouye, one of the most respected men on Capitol Hill, came under fire in the late '80s when he earmarked $8 million to fund schools for Jewish refugees in France—schools that happened to be the pet project of one of his campaign donors. (Inouye later admitted an "error in judgment," and the funding was rescinded.) And even campaign finance reform's patron saint, John McCain, dirtied himself trying to influence

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federal regulators on behalf of failed savings-and-loan operator Charles Keating back in the '80s.

What separates Torricelli from his Senate colleagues, and what ultimately engenders their contempt, is his shamelessness. Unlike many of his colleagues, Torricelli has never apologized for raking in campaign dollars. On the contrary, he's reveled in it. In 1997, shortly after he entered the Senate, Torricelli regaled a *Washington Post* reporter with the details (well, most of the details; David Chang's name didn't come up) of how he raised more than $9 million for his campaign. He boasted of the 300 fund-raisers he attended during his 15-month campaign and the three hours he spent each day dialing for dollars. Even today, in the midst of his troubles, Torricelli has tried to scare off potential challengers in his 2002 reelection campaign by stating that he intends to raise $20 million for the race.

Torricelli, in other words, does not abide by the precious hypocrisies that govern the U.S. Senate. "[I]f you accept that he's going to look at the world as 'what works for Bob Torricelli,' then you can deal with him," says one Democratic consultant. "But that's not how most senators view the world. And, if they do, they're not honest about it. Bob is extraordinarily honest about it. It's a real personality problem." Indeed, by being honest, Torricelli shines an unflattering light on his colleagues and their own fund-raising activities. Says one Democratic staffer about other senators' reactions to Torricelli's current travails: "Every one of them has to be thinking, 'There but for the grace of God go I.'"

Given the embarrassment Torricelli engenders, maybe it's not surprising his aides and allies had such a difficult time finding a Democratic senator willing to say good things about him. But eventually, after who knows how much cajoling, two stepped to the plate. One was Corzine, the former Goldman Sachs executive who owes his political career to the senior senator from New Jersey. Not only did Torricelli provide Corzine, a political novice, with crucial strategic support during the general election, but Torricelli also played a prominent behind-the-scenes role during Corzine's primary fight against former New Jersey Governor Jim Florio. "Torricelli brought us Jon Corzine," says one New Jersey Democrat.

A week after I first called Corzine, and three days after my deadline, he called me back. He defended Torricelli on the charges of party disloyalty, saying that Torricelli is simply "an independent thinker." He vouched for Torricelli's Senate relations: "I certainly see him interacting with other senators in a positive way." As for the investigation, Corzine said, "I believe these are administrative issues that I suspect most campaigns have." (Shortly before taking office, in fact, Corzine gave $10,000 to Torricelli's legal defense fund.) When I asked him why he thought other senators were reluctant to make that case, he said, "I can't speak for other members."

The other senator who called back was Cantwell. A former executive at the Internet company RealNetworks, Cantwell was worth as much as $80 million when she ran for Senate in Washington last year; spending $13 million of her own money, she won her race by one-tenth of 1 percent. In the last few months, however, Cantwell's RealNetworks stock has lost about 80 percent of its value, and last month she was unable to repay a $3.2 million loan that had come due. Other Democratic senators, like Hillary Clinton and John Edwards, are now helping her raise money to pay off her remaining $1.25 million campaign debt. Cantwell didn't want to talk about the Torricelli investigation. "I'm not familiar enough with the details," she demurred. She didn't even want to discuss the instances in which Torricelli had strayed from the party line. Rather, Cantwell just wanted to convey a more general message about Torricelli. "I view him very positively," she said. ■

Did integration cause the Cincinnati riots?

Boomerang

By MICHELLE COTTLE

CINCINNATI

EVEN ON A good day, Vine Street isn't the sort of place your local Junior League would meet for tea. Slicing through the western end of the depressed Over-the-Rhine neighborhood, it is a land of pawnshops and check-cashing stores—a place where clots of young black men linger in doorways and drug dealers call "Bud? Bud?" to passersby.

But just a week after local police shot an unarmed black man a few blocks from here, sparking a wave of riots, the scene is downright eerie. Most shops remain closed, their windows (or what's left of them) shrouded in protective plywood. A sad cardboard sign taped to the door of Uptown TV reads GONE OUT OF BUSINESS, while, across the way, someone has spray-painted MURDER on the front of Tuckers Restaurant. The only sign of life is the young tough slouching against the front of Bill's grocery store, which stands defiantly open and, thanks to the heavy metal gratings shielding its windows and doors, relatively unscathed.

The desolation, however, is misleading. And understanding why helps explain why the city is such a racial tinderbox. Economically, Over-the-Rhine is actually experiencing something of a revival. While three-quarters of neighborhood residents are black and the vast majority live below the poverty line, Cincinnati has spent the last decade trying to turn this pocket of urban poverty into a place where

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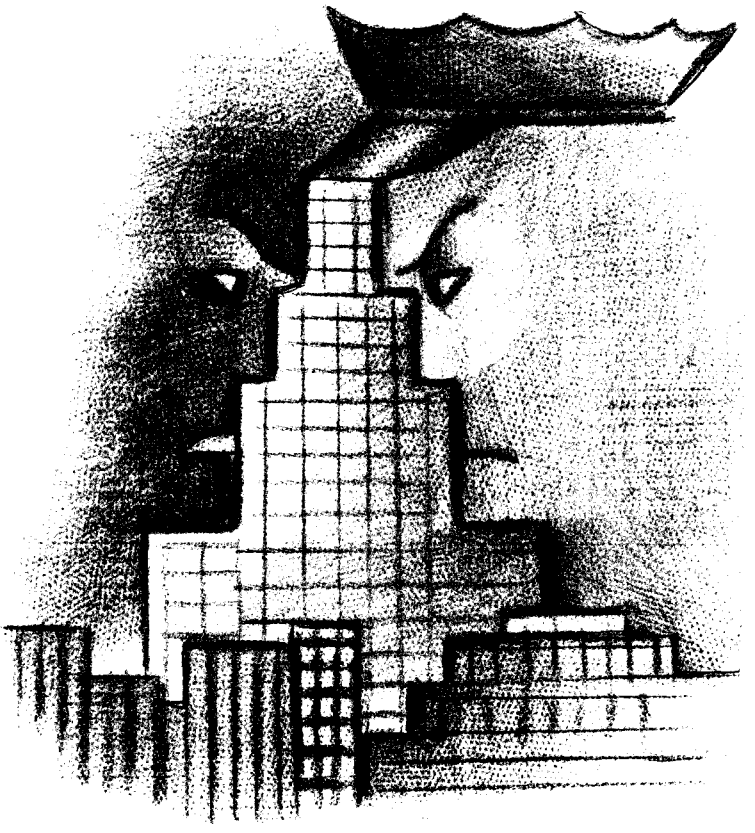
upper-income white folks come to eat, drink, shop, and even live. By most accounts, the effort is succeeding. Property values are on the rise, as is demand for market-rate housing. Some 600 businesses now belong to the Over-the-Rhine Chamber of Commerce (not counting numerous mom-and-pop stores), and, last year alone, an estimated 90 (admittedly tiny) dot-com startups set up shop in the neighborhood. Nowhere is the transformation more conspicuous than in the refurbished Main Street entertainment district, four blocks east of Vine, where crack houses and liquor stores have given way to art galleries and jazz clubs. Every evening, as the drug trade shifts into high gear over by Bill's, the yuppie masses descend on Main to shell out big bucks for oversize martinis and live music. Meanwhile, commute-weary suburbanites have moved into the hills on Over-the-Rhine's north end—a neighorhood of run-down Victorian houses that, with a little labor (and more than a little cash), are being transformed into historical showplaces offering fabulous views of the city.



DAVID SUTER

Over-the-Rhine, in short, is experiencing the kind of in-migration that is reshaping inner cities from Harlem to Chicago's South Side to L.A.'s South Park. The media typically gives these transformations glowing coverage. And, in many ways, they're right. White suburbanites have eased Over-the-Rhine's cultural isolation and brought with them badly needed tax dollars, along with the private and public investments for which forgotten inner-city neighborhoods have long clamored.

Chief among the public investments is more police. And that's where it gets tricky. Most middle-class whites won't visit, let alone move to, the inner city unless they know the police will be there in force to ensure their safety. In Over-the-Rhine, the increase in police presence (and police vigilance) in recent years has been dramatic. Not only does the city put extra officers on patrol during the entertainment district's peak hours, but many off-duty officers moonlight as private security guards for area businesses. Few of the patrolmen come from the neighborhood, and critics charge that they are more concerned with protecting its (white) club-hoppers and house-renovators than its longtime (black) residents. In fact, according to many of those old-timers, protecting the newcomers has led to increased police harassment of black youth. In a sense, then, Cincinnati's riots were emblematic of a new kind of racial conflict, born of creeping prosperity. And it helps explain why, over the past few years, police brutality has become America's preoccupying racial trauma—the distinct trauma of a society whose efforts to overcome racial segregation far outpace its efforts to overcome racial injustice.

A stroll down Main Street throws the contrast between Cincinnati's old and new—between its haves and have-nots—into sharp relief. Two doors over from the trendy Courtyard Café stands the Mary Magdalene soup kitchen. The Suzanna Terrill Gallery sits across from The Franciscan at St. John Social Services Center, while the Over-the-Rhine Resource Center is a stone's throw from Mr. Pitiful's jazz club and from Classical Glass, whose colorful, artsy offerings sparkle in the windows. At night, the contrast grows even more stark as suburban revelers flood the streets. "Main Street is mixed," says Bill Walton, a homeless man who spends his days wandering Over-the-Rhine. "You have the people who go in to spend two and three dollars a drink, and then the black people hanging around outside panhandling." Not surprisingly, the city maintains a heavy police presence. "Go downtown anytime on the weekend, and you'll see police on every corner," says Cecil Thomas, a retired cop turned community activist who now heads the Human Relations Commission, a city-funded independent nonprofit devoted to improving community relations. With parts of the neighborhood experiencing economic growth, says Thomas, you create a situation in which police are essentially saying to businesses and homeowners, "I'll protect *you* from *them*. I'll make sure they won't get your property."

Indeed, in addition to regular police patrols, around two dozen Main Street clubs pay the city to have a detail of off-duty (uniformed) officers keep a solicitous eye on patrons and their cars. The off-duty police do more than keep drunken partyers from getting too rowdy; they see to it that the frequently inebriated suburbanites don't stumble into robberies or assaults on the way home. In the process, cops have been known to shoo bums away a little brusquely or to take minor infractions—like violations of the city's juvenile curfew—a little more seriously. The police have been incredibly responsive in addressing problems with panhandling and general safety in the area, says Judith Osborn, executive director of Over-the-Rhine's Chamber of Commerce. Not surprisingly, this breeds resentment among less-well-off residents who feel locals receive harsher treatment than well-off visitors. "They don't *never* fuck with them people on Main," rants a young black man who identifies himself as

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"Chopper City." "They be clubbing *hard*—a whole mass of 'em. And the cops don't mess with them. But four people be down here [on Vine], and they get all in the middle of us, wanting to know what we doing." Carrie Johnson, head of the Over-the-Rhine Community Council, agrees: "The ones come in for the bars they treat like royalty. The few [poor people] that still on that street is catching hell."

From time to time, tension over this unequal treatment bursts into the open—as it did in 1995, when a white musician from one of the Main Street clubs was murdered in a nearby parking lot. The police moved swiftly to crack down on potential trouble spots in the area, evicting squatters from an abandoned building near the club and shutting down a local grocery for letting customers buy alcohol and cigarettes with food stamps. The response may or may not have been warranted, but residents definitely considered it unusual, and grumbled to the local paper that nine other slayings in Over-the-Rhine that year (all with black victims) had not elicited nearly the same response. The police denied accusations of disparate treatment and pointed out that low-income residents would also benefit from the cleanup efforts. But as one community activist told *The Cincinnati Enquirer*: "All this has done is increase the hostility that's already here."

From his position inside the police department, Thomas, who retired last year after 27 years on the force, watched the hostility fester. "I worked every neighborhood, and I've got a real good feel for Cincinnati," he says. Finally, after observing what he calls a pattern of "overaggressive policing" emerge during the '90s, he spoke out. As head of the city's black officers' group, known as the Sentinel Police Association, Thomas launched an independent investigation of his own department. The conclusion: "We were having too many aggressive contacts"—macings, handcuffings at routine traffic stops, and so on. Thomas's investigation also revealed a pattern of nonviolent harassment: Where once police just issued drivers a verbal warning for, say, not wearing a seat belt or having expired tags, they were now handing out multiple citations—which, at more than $100 a pop, can quickly devastate your average Over-the-Rhine resident.

It was this sort of low-grade harassment, in fact, that indirectly led to last week's riots. Timothy Thomas, the unarmed youth shot to death, was fleeing police because he had 14 outstanding warrants—twelve for traffic violations, two for misdemeanor obstruction of justice citations. Thomas brought the number of black men killed by Cincinnati police since 1995 to 15. After previous shootings, citizens had staged nonviolent protests and mini-marches, accusing police of racial discrimination. In March, the ACLU joined the battle, filing suit against the department and charging a 30-year pattern of racial profiling. When the police killed Thomas, the city's black youth finally turned violent en masse.

IN THEIR OWN defense, police say they work just as hard to "serve and protect" the city's poor residents as they do its affluent ones. "You might get some individuals who would maybe complain about different treatment," says Lieutenant Ray Ruberg, who worked as shift commander for Over-the-Rhine's District One before becoming the department's information officer. "But, really, it wasn't any [different] than anywhere else—the treatment or the number of complaints . . . I don't know what the difference in treatment would be."

Still, the department clearly suffers from systemic problems. For starters, well over half the force lives in the (lily-white) suburbs, according to Ruberg. (Other cities, such as Boston, require officers to live within city limits—something black leaders here would like Cincinnati to do.) At the very least, Cecil Thomas has recommended the city place more emphasis on community-oriented policing strategies (or "COPs")—getting officers to walk their beats and build relationships with locals. Currently, he says, only a handful of Cincinnati officers receive COPs training, while the vast majority cruise neighborhoods in their patrol cars, looking for troublemakers but rarely integrating themselves into the community. "They drive up in their cars real fast, slam on the brakes, and see who runs," Thomas groans. "The one who runs must be wanted." "I'd like to see more cops walking the beat in Over-the-Rhine," agrees Michele Tromblay, who for 23 years has run the St. Francis Bookshop on Vine. "It's been a long time since I've seen police officers out walking and talking to people. I only see them driving through."

Compounding the problem, Cincinnati's force is relatively young and inexperienced—not to mention three-quarters white. As one woman asked the city council at a post-riot hearing, "If you raise police in segregated neighborhoods and send them to segregated schools, how do you expect them to act when they're scared [in a black neighborhood]?" Officers with less seniority (translation: the youngest and most nervous) tend to get stuck with the late shifts, when they're most likely to encounter trouble. And, although the department says it tries to have minority officers patrol minority neighborhoods, even many whites in Over-the-Rhine say the effort has been lackluster. "They bring in these hicks to patrol—somebody from way out in the country," says Tebbe Farrell, who works at Shadeau Breads on Main Street. "You'd think they'd at least get them a black partner," she sighs, shaking her blond curls in disbelief, but instead they fill the neighborhood with cops that look like they're straight out of "Ku Klux Klanville."

FOR MANY IN Cincinnati's black community, the increased police run-ins are part of a broader problem. In the days after the riot, inner-city residents made it clear that they see their neighborhoods' changes not as a revival but as an assault. During gatherings at churches, on college campuses, and at City Hall, citizens decried the city's push for gentrification.

Much of the conflict, not surprisingly, concerns real estate. "Around six months ago, [the city] blocked a really good package of houses that was going to be created by low-income housing groups," says the Reverend Duane Holm, head of the Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati. Both Holm and Carrie Johnson told of residents' anger over the city council's rejection last June of a request by ReStoc, a low-income housing group, for $700,000 to help rehabilitate eight buildings on Vine Street. ReStoc had

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already obtained some $4 million in state and private loans but needed the additional $700,000 from the city, which was to have come from a pot of federal dollars earmarked for low-income housing. The decision spurred protests down at City Hall, but, as the local paper reported at the time, "council members said there was already too much low-income housing in Over-the-Rhine, and it [was] inhibiting revitalization efforts." Several months later, the council agreed to release the funds—provided that ReStoc sold some of its other properties to a for-profit developer.

Even seemingly minor zoning issues trigger racial tension. Back in 1997, residents of upscale Klotter Street, on a steep hillside at the north edge of Over-the-Rhine, complained to the city that young thugs were using a steep staircase running from their street down to the seedier McMicken Avenue as a thoroughfare for burglarizing homes and cars. The residents of McMicken countered that they used the stairs to go to the grocery store, take their children to school, and so on. In early 1998 the city erected a tall chain-link fence around the steps, making pedestrian travel difficult and effectively turning Klotter into a gated community.

Local black leaders also cite an ongoing effort by Eric Kunzel, conductor of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, to build a performing-arts school near the city's music hall, which sits in the middle of Over-the-Rhine. "Unfortunately, he's got advisers around him who figured that it would also be a chance to move the Drop-In Center and low-income housing people out of the neighborhood," says Holm. "It was a bitter struggle for two or three years, until supporters of the school learned it would cost them more than it was worth to drive out [those groups]." In the face of protests, Kunzel's group shifted the planned campus a couple of blocks to minimize neighborhood disruption. But many residents remain convinced that the multimillion-dollar arts center will ultimately hurt locals. "It's for the rich," rants Johnson. "That's what it's about. They plan to take this here whole downtown and move us out."

IT WOULD BE unfair to suggest that the yuppie influx hasn't helped the longtime residents of Over-the-Rhine at all. While the entertainment district has primarily incubated businesses that cater to wealthier patrons, it is also spawning a few that serve the less-affluent, such as a planned laundromat around the corner from Main. And, while the upscale joints may not serve many local clients, they do employ local workers—especially kids. "Mr. Pitiful's hires a lot of people from the neighborhood to help clean up," says Farrell. "In fact, every business owner has at least one kid to help." And even the police crackdowns have one obvious upside: safer streets. Though it still suffers the highest crime rate in the city, Over-the-Rhine has seen crime decline in recent years—down 26 percent, for instance, between the first half of 1998 and the first half of 1999.

The question, of course, is how to balance development with preservation—how to rejuvenate a community without harassing and displacing the people who already live there. It's a question political and civic leaders have been debating at least since the late '70s, when *The Washington Post* began reporting on "the new mouthful word, 'gentrification.'" But the issue has returned with a vengeance in the last few years, as a booming economy, falling crime rates, and disenchantment with the suburbs have produced the first significant white, middle-class urban influx in a generation.

Between 1990 and 2000, for instance, Atlanta saw a 6 percent rise in the population of non-Hispanic whites—sparking cultural clashes and roiling community politics. As *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* has reported, whites have asked city inspectors to crack down on their black neighbors for things like leaving old vehicles parked in their front yards. On the flip side, black community leaders have sued to halt further development in certain areas. Meanwhile, some 25,000 low-income residents will be displaced as Chicago finishes tearing down the infamous Cabrini Green housing projects to make room for mixed-income housing and businesses. (A Starbucks has moved into the neighborhood.) Already, the city has settled one suit filed on behalf of 650 to 700 displaced families.

SIMILARLY, THE HIGH-TECH boom in northern Virginia has brought money and yuppies cascading into once-blighted Washington, D.C., neighborhoods like Shaw and Logan Circle, sending property values sky-high and forcing out some longtime residents. The shifting demographics have led more than one black politician in the city—including former Mayor Marion Barry—to rally black voters against the specter of "Chocolate City" turning vanilla. And, of course, in Rudy Giuliani's New York, neighborhoods that yuppies once avoided around Columbia University and the Lower East Side are now crawling with coffee shops and renovated lofts. But paving their way have been hordes of increasingly aggressive police, who have reduced street crime by stopping and patting down young black and Hispanic men by the thousands—making police brutality and racial profiling the city's most explosive issues.

For years, American reformers, particularly liberal ones, dreamed of a white return to the inner city. In significant measure, their dreams have been realized: Whites are more likely to live near the black poor than anyone would have predicted a decade ago. But they often remain separated from those neighbors by a thin blue line. And, as Cincinnati shows, if there's one thing more dangerous than segregation, it may be integration without equality.

The Tuesday following the riots, a cold front gripped Ohio, sending icy winds and snow showers across Cincinnati. All along Main Street, purposeful shop owners were repairing their war-torn businesses. Graffiti was covered over; plywood was pulled down. On the sidewalk in front of Jump Café & Bar, two burly men struggled to install a fresh pane of glass. Meanwhile, over on Vine Street, Brother Bill Spond stood on the steps of the St. Francis Friary, handing out free sandwiches to the needy. "Bologna or peanut butter?" he asked each weary-looking petitioner who trudged up the stairs. "Doughnuts or cookies?" Plastic baggies in hand, the recipients headed back out into the cold—four blocks, and a world away, from the bright lights of Main. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Dramatizing James

On January 5, 1895, Henry James's play *Guy Domville* was produced in London and was hooted by the audience. Some critics, however, were cordial, including George Bernard Shaw, who wrote, "No doubt if the literary world were as completely dominated by the admirers of Mr. Rider Haggard as the dramatic world is by their first cousins, we should be told that Mr. James cannot write a novel.... Mr. James's dramatic authorship is valid, and his plays are *du théâtre* when the right people are in the theater." Nonetheless James was grievously wounded by the audience's reception. Says Leon Edel in his copious biography:

> The entry in his notebook of February 14, 1895 shows him in the process of becoming aware that if he had been, so to speak, a novelist turned playwright, he might think now of these roles as reversed: he could be a playwright turning back to the novel.... He would never again write the kind of novel he had written before his dramatic years. The stage had given him technical skills: these he would now use in his fiction. A story could be told as if it were a play; characters could be developed as they develop on the stage; a novel could be given the skeletal structure of drama.

The observations hold, except—a big exception—characters cannot be developed by the same means on the stage and in a novel. The stories of James's subsequent novels reflect his dramatic ambitions (not that his previous fiction was undramatic; it's a question of balance and intent). But his characters are developed with the sorts of time and excursion and introspection that are not easily available in the theater.

This morphological fact makes rough going for screen adapters of a James novel. The film medium has some technical resources for character exploration not available to the theater. (During a character's long speech, visual variations—flashbacks and so forth—are possible; or a voice-over permits introspection while the story proceeds.) But the hard case remains that a James novel, especially a later one, melds the urge to dramatic action with a novelistic treatment of character. The screen adapter has to accommodate these two fused concepts to still a third medium.

Now a novel that was published in 1904, nine years after *Guy Domville* appeared, has been adapted for the screen by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. She is herself an accomplished novelist, and has long been writing screenplays for the Merchant-Ivory production team that made this picture. In 1984 Jhabvala adapted *The Bostonians*, which, though written before *Guy Domville*, presented some of the problems that are even greater in **The Golden Bowl** (Lions Gate). With this later book, Jhabvala had absolutely to perform transmutation. She had to reverse the change that Edel describes, returning the rebuffed playwright who cloaked his drama in the novel's wide garments to the relative litheness of the theater—in film form.

The story might as easily be called a shape. In 1903 Maggie Verver, a young American living in Europe, marries an Italian aristocrat, Prince Amerigo. What Maggie does not know is that the prince has been the lover of her friend Charlotte Stant, another young American living in Europe. Charlotte and the prince have not married, because they are poor. Charlotte subsequently marries Maggie's billionaire father Adam, of whom she is genuinely fond though she remains passionate about Amerigo. Adam, too, does not know of the Charlotte-Amerigo affair. We have a foursome, then, tightly linked, ahead of whom lie revelations and encounters.

The dichotomy in *The Golden Bowl* is plain. The novel's plot is unashamedly that of a daring Edwardian drama. What takes the book far past Pinero or even Wilde is its depth of characterization. If a competent dramatist had used this plot, he would have enriched his characters by theater means to avoid a pat and loaded symmetry. But Jhabvala had the task of dealing with characters who are largely explored in non-dramatic prose, a tough job.

She has not quite succeeded in converting James's drama-novel into an equivalent novel-screenplay. The novel is inevitably stripped of its rich characterological garments and is left relatively naked as a clever plot—in the basest sense "theatrical." (Among other penalties, the symbolism of the crack in the titular golden bowl becomes blatant, and the means by which the bowl affects the story seems clumsy.)

Jhabvala begins with a violent, passionate episode drawn from the Renaissance past of Amerigo's ancient family, an episode that foretells the more genteel violence and passion of the latter-day story. This is a strong start, but even stronger is the early revelation of the Charlotte-Amerigo affair, from which Amerigo is trying to withdraw because he truly loves the woman he is to marry. There is no point in detailing other changes from the novel. (James is focused, of course, on his recurrent theme of American-European contradictions and absorptions, particularly American innocence discovering European experience, with the perception that both the innocence and the experience are more complex than they had seemed.) The ending differs from the book in arrangement, though not in import, and it is somewhat abrupt. We need a few moments to grasp it as The End, but it is worth the wait.

James Ivory, whose direction flourished almost beyond recognition with *Howards End* and *The Remains of the Day*, has not lost cinematic fluency here, though he does over-emphasize Adam Verver's passion for art collecting. We long for an occasional shot in one of Verver's English houses that is not loaded with paintings and statuary. (The luxuriating cinematographer was Tony Pierce-Roberts, who did the two films mentioned above plus five others for this director.) But the firmest questions to ask Ivory, or the Merchant-Ivory team, are about the acting.

Kate Beckinsale, who plays Maggie, is best remembered as Hero in Kenneth Branagh's *Much Ado About Nothing*. She is not a commanding talent, but she is true enough here, winning in her love for her father and her husband, overwhelmed when she learns that her husband has been her stepmother's lover and in fact is not yet disentangled. Anjelica Huston, as the American wife of an English gent, is so fine, so distinguished, that we can only weep for a film and theater culture that does not give this splendid actress the career she deserves. James Fox, always so swiftly likable, is her husband, adding his bits of worth to the enterprise.

But Nick Nolte, as Adam Verver, falls between two stools. He is credible enough as a Yank wide-eyed in the presence of European culture, but he is so apt at this

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naïveté that he never surpasses it. We get no hint of the enterprise, the energy, the hum of achievement in this man who is the first American billionaire. He could be just another gaping tourist, not the tycoon who is planning a huge American museum to house large chunks of European culture, driven by love of America and jealousy of history.

Jeremy Northam is disappointing as Amerigo. He was incisive in *An Ideal Husband*, even more so in *The Winslow Boy*. As Amerigo he is only a bit better than bland. He is an honest actor, but something in the prince eluded him: a comprehension that would ignite him. Perhaps as one result, his accent keeps slipping. (An Italian speaking English doesn't call himself "Italian"; he says "Eetahlian.")

But the real drag on the film is Uma Thurman as Charlotte. Through a number of leading roles—in such pictures as *Dangerous Liaisons* and *Pulp Fiction* and *Sweet and Lowdown*—she has acquired some standing as an artist. This is a mystery to me, and here the mystery deepens. She lacks, among other things, a center from which her acting could proceed. When passion or anger or fear are needed, she "does" them, supplies them like a saleswoman taking items from a shelf. Consequently, what we see is a series of scenes that she has probably marked blue or yellow or red in her copy of the script. The missing element, far beyond superficial mimesis, is a convincing individual, a woman of her time yet with emotions that fracture convention.

At the last, we are left with a film that is only a view, though an interesting one, of the re-articulated work it might have more closely approached but could never really be. ■

How to Be Free and Happy

By THOMAS NAGEL

Bertrand Russell: The Ghost of Madness, 1921–1970 by Ray Monk

(The Free Press, 590 pp., $40)

I.

BERTRAND RUSSELL WAS born in 1872 and died in 1970. This second volume of Ray Monk's historically authoritative biography begins exactly halfway through the life, in 1921. It has the curious property of transcending the emotional and sympathetic limitations of its author: Russell's greatness and indomitable force of life shine through the scrupulously researched narrative in spite of the relentless contempt and distaste with which Monk presents it. To his credit, Monk acknowledges in the preface that his attitude toward Russell may have distorted the account; but equally to his credit, I found that even with Monk's emphases, the facts presented did not support his attitude.

This is another of those painful biographies of a major creative figure that open up personal failings and sexual agonies to the kind of intimate scrutiny that none of us could withstand. Those who read Monk's first volume may have felt, as I did, the indecency of being exposed to the depths of Russell's misery and the expression of his sexual passions. Why does a great philosopher, or a great artist, or a great scientist, forfeit his privacy forever, so that we all get to read his love letters and sneer at his weaknesses? What such people create is always something far finer than they are. It is extracted from a flawed and messy self so that it can float free, detached from the imperfect life that produced it.

Granted, in Russell's case there is more

THOMAS NAGEL is currently writing, with Liam Murphy, a book on taxes and justice.

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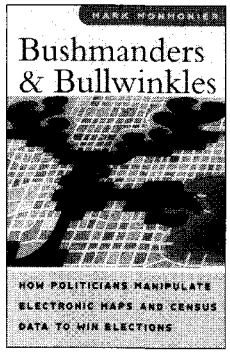
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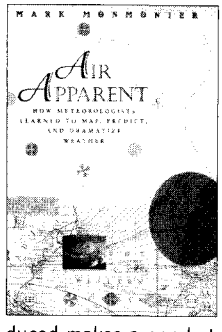

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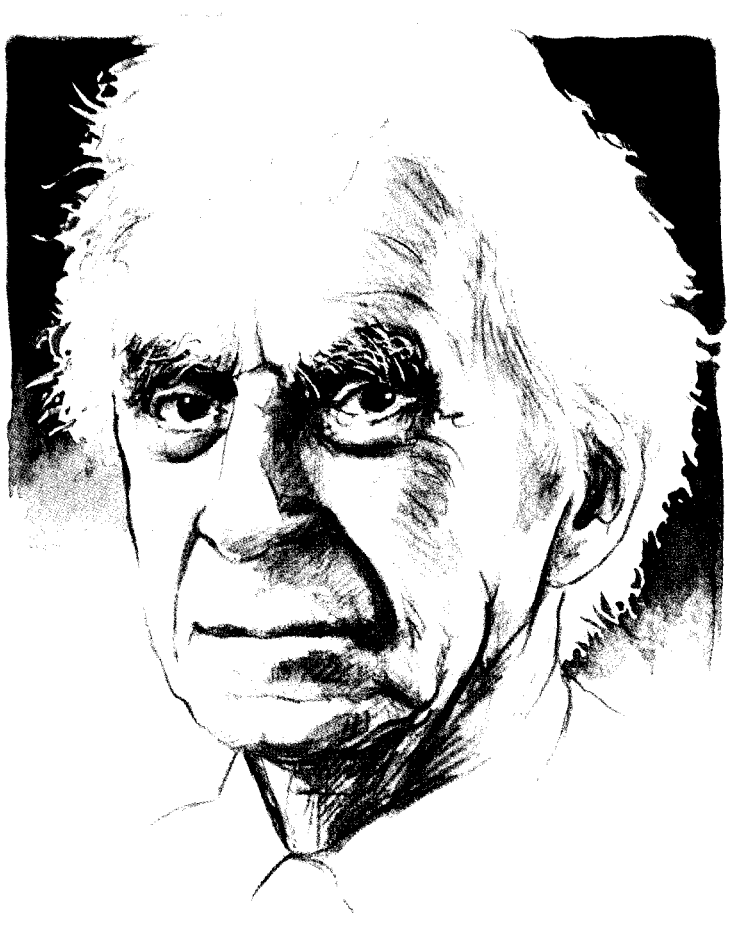
excuse than usual for comprehensive attention, since he himself went public about so much. He published an autobiography that was at least an attempt at self-exposure, and he wrote a great deal about life, sex, and the pursuit of happiness. He had the self-assurance of an aristocrat and the independence of mind of a great intellect, and perhaps he would not have cared what we know about him.

Certainly he was not consumed by shame and by the desire to hide, like Wittgenstein, the subject of an equally excruciating and informative biography by Monk. In that book it is clear that Wittgenstein has Monk's profound sympathy, yet he comes across as an insufferably selfish and heartless human being. Russell comes across as a basically decent and generous man with personal flaws, who led a life of stupendous energy and achievement in which he attempted to have some good effect on the world in his murderous and creative epoch. The life was also shot through with personal disasters, and Monk does what he can to blame Russell for these. He castigates Russell for vanity, egotism, and personal coldness, and heaps scorn on the reams of popular journalism that Russell produced to make a living and to care for others after he had given away his inheritance, mainly to support T. S. Eliot and the London School of Economics.

Russell also did not share, to put it mildly, Wittgenstein's reluctance to publish, or his conviction that philosophers should stay out of the world. When Wittgenstein in the 1920s rebuked Russell for his activities in favor of peace and freedom, Russell asked whether it would be preferable to establish a World Organization for War and Slavery. Wittgenstein replied, of course, "Yes, rather that, rather that!"

Though it is popularly and journalistically thought to be central to the job description of a philosopher to discover how we should live, and then to reveal the secret to the rest of us, it is in fact rare for philosophers to set themselves this audacious task. Most of the major philosophers of the past have concentrated their efforts on trying to understand the nature of reality, truth, and knowledge. While this includes ethical theory, that is not the same thing as knowing how to live, since one cannot live merely by not doing what is wrong. This tradition of the abstract and theoretical character of philosophy continues unbroken, for the most part, and analytic philosophers belong to it.

Russell is the great exception. He was a figure of towering originality, one of the founders of mathematical logic, analytic philosophy, and the philosophy of language, and a logico-metaphysical visionary of the type of Leibniz, with a brilliant command of the mathematics and the science of his day. But he spent a large proportion of his time and energy trying to communicate to his fellow human beings a set of ideas about sex, love, happiness, religion, social organization, public responsibility, education, war, and peace—an effort that increasingly dominated the second half of his life, though it had already been prominent in the first; and he did so with a wit reminiscent of Voltaire. He was fearless, outspoken, and eloquent, and, while his judgment was sometimes egregiously wrong, for someone who spoke out continually on so many subjects he had a pretty good record.



Bertrand Russell by Jack Coughlin for The New Republic

He was a believer in reason, and it is easy to deride him for this, given the dark forces at work in the world against whose evils he fought. Monk quotes Keynes's remark that Russell held the inconsistent beliefs that all the world's ills were due to irrationality, and that the solution to them was simply that we should conduct ourselves rationally. Keynes had a point, because the explanation of irrationality is not in most cases a failure of understanding, so it will not be put right by patient instruction. Yet Russell's unstinting effort to be the voice of reason was an honorable course. Whatever other forces may be at work, it is a contribution to progress to try to say as clearly as possible what makes sense and what does not; at least it applies pressure in the right direction, and indicates the path to be followed when people are ready to listen to reason.

Monk is particularly dismissive of Russell's rationalistic claim that romanticism as an intellectual movement was partly responsible for fascism, because of its denigration of reason and of the idea of objective truth, by comparison with feeling and instinct. "Rationality," wrote Russell, "in the sense of an appeal to a universal and impersonal standard of truth, is of supreme importance to the well-being of the human species, not only in ages in which it easily prevails but also, and even more, in those less fortunate times in which it is despised and rejected as the vain dream of men who lack the virility to kill where they cannot agree." It is equally possible, of course, to murder millions of people in the name of objective truth, as Stalin did—though we cannot for that reason blame the gulag on the Enlightenment. I think that Monk underrates the power of ideas to infuse and to give shape to fanaticism that depends also on other causes. The rejection of reason and objectivity was fundamental to the character of Nazism and quite explicitly so, and the strength of philosophical romanticism in Germany probably weakened resistance to it. (Less lethal political fallout from debased forms of the view that there is no such thing as objective truth is still with us, in the excesses of multiculturalism.)

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II.

RUSSELL'S MOST FAMOUS popular book was *Marriage and Morals*, which appeared in 1929. So much of what he called for in that volume has been achieved by the sexual revolution and the women's movement that I suppose no one reads it any more. Its rationality and its good sense exist in painful counterpoint with the unraveling of his second marriage, to Dora Black, which was happening when he wrote it. Russell's book is not a defense of free love, but it offers an argument that adultery should not in general lead to divorce, because it is so important to keep families with children together:

> A marriage that begins with passionate love and leads to children who are desired and loved ought to produce so deep a tie between a man and a woman that they will feel something infinitely precious in their companionship even after sexual passion has decayed, and even if either or both of them feels sexual passion for someone else. This mellowing of marriage has been prevented by jealousy, but jealousy, though it is an instinctive emotion, is one which can be controlled if it is recognized as bad, and not supposed to be the expression of a just moral indignation.

It would be easier and healthier, Russell thought, to suppress jealousy than to suppress errant sexual attraction; but here reason proved not to be a good guide, at least in his own life. He had underestimated the power of sex. In his autobiography he said that he had been "blinded by theory."

At the age of forty-nine Russell was overjoyed at the arrival of his first child, John, and two years later there was a daughter, Kate; but after seven years of marriage he became impotent with his wife. Dora was half his age and much more radical, politically and personally. She had always believed in complete sexual freedom, and during one of Russell's lecture tours to the United States she became pregnant by one of her lovers, Griffin Barry. She wrote to ask Russell if he wanted her to terminate the pregnancy; Russell said no, and the child, Harriet, was registered legally as his, though after the marriage broke up he expended a major effort to get her name removed from Burke's Peerage and Debrett's.

Russell himself took up with someone else, and all four adults and three children more or less co-habited off and on for a period of time, under severe emotional strain. Eventually Dora and Barry had a second child. Throughout this period

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Russell and Dora were also running the progressive school that they had founded to implement their theories of education, unfortunately influenced by the American behaviorist John B. Watson. This involved a partial abandonment of the close individual relation that they had to their children, who became instead ordinary members of the student body, and were treated somewhat impersonally.

Everything went to pieces in a protracted and bitter divorce, followed by Russell's marriage in 1936 to his lover and secretary Patricia Spence, a woman in her twenties, and the birth to her of his second son, Conrad. Russell and Dora fell into constant conflict over the children. John began to show signs of disturbance as a young adult and was eventually diagnosed as schizophrenic, after having married the daughter of the poet Vachel Lindsay, herself mentally unbalanced; the couple had two daughters, both of whom also became schizophrenic. (One of them committed suicide by burning herself to death at the age of twenty-six.) Conrad was forbidden by his mother to have any contact with Russell after their divorce in 1950, and when he did take up relations with his father as an adult, shortly before the end of Russell's life, his mother kept her word and never spoke to him again.

Russell—frightened and repelled by John's madness and wanting to take over the care of the granddaughters—tried to have John committed, but Dora kept him with her and he managed to survive in her care and even to attend the House of Lords occasionally, having inherited the earldom without regaining his sanity. Monk suggests that the strains to which John was subjected by Russell's mismanaged personal life contributed to his illness, but this is causally naïve. Russell had always been afraid of hereditary madness in the family line, and he was evidently right. Fortunately his relations with his daughter Kate were always good, and his fourth marriage—at the age of eighty to Edith Finch, an American woman a mere twenty-nine years younger than himself—was happy and stable. Monk's relentless censoriousness about Russell's personal troubles seems uncalled for; things can go badly wrong in any family, even that of a tireless social commentator.

III.

RUSSELL WROTE BOOKS called *How to Be Free and Happy, Why I Am Not a Christian, The Conquest of Happiness, In Praise of Idleness*—a kind of popular anti-devotional literature calling for the abandonment of conventional religious and moral taboos and their replacement by freedom, kindness, and a fearless openness to knowledge. He also defended socialism and stood twice for Parliament as a Labour candidate in a safe Conservative district.

Monk approvingly quotes Beatrice Webb's dismissals of Russell as lazy and flippant in his social and political commentary, but at least Russell, unlike Webb, was never enraptured by the Soviet Union; he understood and condemned it from the start. His polemical style was always ironical and mocking rather than dour or enraged, but he had a solid core of decency and common sense that usually kept him on the right track. His popular writings are light, fluent, and full of amusing sound bites: "Children were idealized by Wordsworth and unidealized by Freud. Marx was the Wordsworth of the proletariat; its Freud is still to come." It is perhaps Monk's lack of humor, an unfortunate quality in a biographer of Russell, that makes him immune to Russell's charm.

Russell also produced excellent books of popular science—*The ABC of Atoms, The ABC of Relativity*—and was absorbed by both the promise and the menace of science. It is a sphere where reason and objectivity reign, and it offers the possibility of eventually making the world a material paradise; but it also puts into the hands of irrational and power-mad political leaders technologically advanced means of destruction that could eventually destroy civilization. Russell sounded this warning long before the invention of nuclear weapons, and the danger that he saw from coupling advanced science with barbaric politics is still acutely real.

His powerful concern with war and peace led to some of his finest moments, and also to some of his most foolish moments. He was sent to prison and fired from Trinity College, Cambridge for advocating resistance to conscription during World War I. He was not a pacifist on principle, but he regarded it as monstrous that two nations as civilized as Britain and Germany could go to war with each another. Who can disagree with him? He favored world government as a basis for peace, but thought that it could be achieved only by forceful domination of the world by one overwhelming power, and had some hope that the United States might play this role.

Russell's hatred of war led him to favor British neutrality in the 1930s, and in 1936 it resulted in what was probably his silliest publication, *Which Way to Peace?* It argued that if Britain simply disbanded its own armed forces, the continued military posturing of the Nazis would come to seem ridiculous, and they would be laughed out of power by their own compatriots. It was only when the war started that he finally acknowledged the necessity of a military response to Hitler.

THE ADVENT OF nuclear weapons at the end of the war fulfilled Russell's longstanding fears of the technological threat to the survival of civilization. During the brief period when these weapons were an American monopoly, he urged that the Soviet Union be forced by the threat of their use to submit to a world government whose dominant power would be the United States. He had for a long time been fiercely anti-Soviet. He believed Stalin was bent on world domination, and maintained in private correspondence the ruthless position that even an actual nuclear war against the Russians would be worthwhile if it prevented Soviet domination of Europe and Soviet acquisition of the bomb.

Once the American nuclear monopoly ended, however, Russell's overwhelming concern became the prevention of a nuclear war in which the two sides would destroy each other and take with them the populations of many countries that had no nuclear weapons. He favored the unilateral abandonment of the bomb by Britain, not in the unrealistic hope that it would lead the United States and the Soviet Union to follow suit, but in the hope that it would enable Britain to play a role in getting the two superpowers to cooperate in preventing any further nuclear proliferation—which he regarded as posing the greatest danger to the survival of civilization.

The threat of proliferation is still present, but it is getting hard to remember the threat of global annihilation that formed a basso continuo to our lives for decades. The United States and the Soviet Union were fully prepared to destroy each other and much of the rest of the world completely, under certain conditions. Perhaps it was unrealistic to hope that this threat could be eliminated without the disappearance of the absolute political conflict over the future of mankind that lay behind it—which is what finally happened. Yet in the absence of this resolution, some effort seemed called for in the face of the greatest danger that humanity had ever faced.

Russell did not regard the abolition of nuclear weapons as possible, and he even recognized their value as a deterrent; but he worked tirelessly to give effect to the common interest in reducing the threat of nuclear war. He was instrumental in setting up the regular meetings of scientists from both sides of the Iron Curtain known as the Pugwash Conferences, and he campaigned for the suspension of nuclear tests, which was a realistic goal. He published *Common Sense and Nuclear War-*

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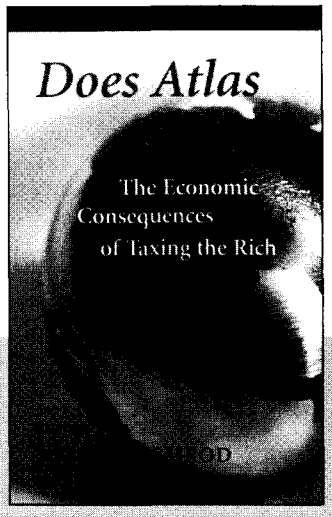
fare in 1959, and served as president of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. This involvement led to the entry into his life of Ralph Schoenman, an American radical and former Princeton philosophy student who was twenty-four when he met Russell, then eighty-eight, in 1960.

Schoenman persuaded Russell to lead a movement of civil disobedience against the bomb, and in 1962 to set up the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, which attracted substantial monetary contributions, including large sums from Russell himself, that were used to further Schoenman's agenda. Schoenman was virulently anti-American and pro-Cuban, and as the Vietnam war developed into a major American commitment Russell was drawn into Schoenman's Guevarist position, favoring "many Vietnams" as the way to bring down American imperialism. Statements and letters began to appear over Russell's signature whose heavy style showed that they had not been composed by him (as both he and Schoenman eventually admitted): "The message that Cuba has for the peoples of the world is one of utter determination in struggling against great odds for liberation from brutal foreign domination and rapacious economic exploitation." Russell even sent a telegram to Alexei Kosygin urging him "to place part of the airforce of the Soviet Union at the disposal of the Vietnamese." Monk finds no reason to believe that Russell did not understand or approve of what he signed, but the issue is hardly straightforward. Russell had evidently lost his independence of mind. It is true that he repeatedly declared that Schoenman was his authorized representative; but given that he was in his mid-nineties and in deteriorating health, it seems both uncharitable and unrealistic to construe this as an example of fully informed consent.

There were attempted interventions in the Sino-Indian border dispute, the Cuban missile crisis, the Bolivian trial of Regis Debray, and of course the Vietnam war again, through the war crimes tribunal run by Sartre and Vladimir Dedijer, of which Russell was honorary president, though he did not attend the sessions. It was only in 1968 that Russell, with the support of his wife Edith, detached himself from Schoenman, dismissed him as director of the Peace Foundation, and wrote him out of his will. (In 1966, Russell had written a will bequeathing almost everything that he owned, including the copyright on his books, to the foundation and making Schoenman his executor and trustee. The foundation had absorbed the large advance that Russell received for his autobiography and the proceeds from the sale of his papers to



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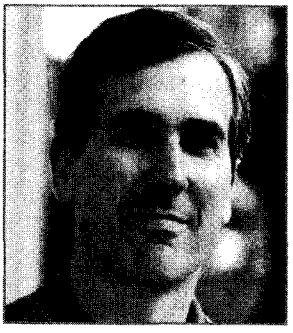

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McMaster University.) Russell's infatuation with a manipulative disciple and his abdication of judgment near the end of his life was tragic and absurd. Monk's detailed account of Schoenman's activities is highly absorbing, but the spectacle was painful to witness at the time for those who admired Russell as a lifelong champion of reason.

THIS IS NOT an intellectual biography. Monk wisely does no more than comment briefly on the abstract philosophical works that Russell produced during the second half of his life, which included a second edition of *Principia Mathematica*, the great classic of logic; *The Analysis of Mind*; *The Analysis of Matter*; *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*; and *Human Knowledge, Its Scope and Limits*, as well as the very successful *A History of Western Philosophy*. And the best intellectual biography of Russell is his own, *My Philosophical Development*, published in 1959.

Monk, a creature of his time, gives the back of his hand to Russell's views on epistemology and the mind-body problem: "Most philosophers regarded, and still regard, Russell's view that what we *see* is an event in our heads as bizarre, an unfortunate legacy from the British empiricism of the eighteenth century." This is a narrow-minded response. Russell's monistic theory of mind and world, and his attempts to explain how knowledge of the external world is possible, deserve to be taken seriously. But he lived long enough to become a distant historical figure while he was still energetically publishing books. A philosophical climate came to dominate Britain that was hostile to the kinds of metaphysical and epistemological ambitions that motivated Russell and most philosophers before him.

This new climate was the outlook derived from Wittgenstein's later work, which flourished in Cambridge, and in Oxford took a somewhat different form as Ordinary Language philosophy—the view being that the traditional questions of philosophy are confusions based on misunderstandings of how language functions, and that in asking and trying to answer those questions we violate the conditions of meaning of the words by which they are posed. Still, like all theories claiming to bring philosophy finally to an end, this one failed to achieve its aim. The Wittgensteinian hope that philosophical problems could be dissolved by the examination of language has very few adherents today, and the ambition to construct large and substantive philosophical theories of the world has again come to dominate the field.

Wittgenstein was a great philosopher, and Russell was always proud of having encouraged him in youth—but Russell, too, was a great philosopher, though not as deep or as obscure. In the present philosophical climate, depth is unfashionable, and systematic, scientifically based theories of knowledge, thought, and reality are again pursued without embarrassment by analytic philosophers much more in the mold of Russell than of Wittgenstein. (Indeed, the idea that the problems of philosophy can be solved by the methods of science has been taken by some philosophers much further than Russell would have contemplated.) Things will certainly change again, but in Russell's technical virtuosity, his distrust of obscurity, and his vast appetite for a comprehensive understanding of the universe, he has left his imprint on our time.

Russell was an extraordinarily fully expressed figure: his popular writings even won him the Nobel Prize for literature in 1950. No doubt vanity and self-love were part of what drove him, and he may have been hard to like, but surely this is trivial by comparison with the result, warts and all. He gave incomparably more to the world than he took from it, and he did little harm. Aristotle advised us to call no man happy until he is dead. Even though Russell's long, embattled, and densely crowded life included much personal misery and public failure, we can now call him happy. ■

Stirred Strings

By LYNN HUNT

Marie d'Agoult: The Rebel Countess by Richard Bolster

(Yale University Press, 278 pp., $25)

George Sand: A Woman's Life Writ Large by Belinda Jack

(Alfred A. Knopf, 395 pp., $30)

IN THE NINETEENTH century, many French women wrote, but few published under their own names. Marie d'Agoult took the pen name Daniel Stern for her book reviews, political essays, and narratives of contemporary events. She apparently fancied herself Daniel surviving in the lion's den of Parisian literary life, and hoped that she would find in the name a lucky star (*Stern* means "star" in German, and her mother was German by birth). Aurore Dupin Dudevant chose George Sand for her pseudonym when she decided to publish her novel *Indiana*. Both her mother-in-law and her mother worried that their surnames might appear on the title page, and she had to reassure them that this was not her intention. Was it true, her mother-in-law demanded, that she "intended to *print* books"? If she had known that Sand wrote her novel to protest the tyranny of marriage, Madame Dudevant would no doubt have been even more alarmed. The author picked "Sand" for her new name because she had already published jointly with her lover Jules Sandeau under the name "J. Sand." She never said why she adopted "George" (an English spelling, not the French "Georges").

Print guarantees a certain immortality, but not necessarily the one desired by those seeking it. These two women wrote in order to make names for themselves, even if not under their original names; but the scandal and the romance of their private lives has kept the spotlight trained on them more as women than as writers. And scandalous those lives were, especially by the standards of the time. Marie shocked her family and friends when, after eight years of marriage, she abandoned her daughter and her husband, Charles d'Agoult, an aristocratic army officer, to elope with the twenty-three-year-old Hungarian pianist and composer Franz Liszt. Already pregnant with the first of her three children by the musician, she

LYNN HUNT is Eugen Weber Professor of Modern European History at UCLA. She is co-author, with Jack Censer, of *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution* (Pennsylvania State University Press).

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embarked on a decade of wandering between Geneva, Paris, and various places in Italy. (Her second daughter by Liszt, Cosima, kept up the family tradition by leaving her first husband for another musical genius, Richard Wagner, whom she eventually married.)

George Sand cut an even more astonishing figure, for she gained notoriety not just for a dramatic liaison with a famous artist but for a completely new style of life, dubbed by its critics "George Sandism." Although her books certainly contributed to her reputation, they have resonated far less over the years than the image of the cigar-smoking, cross-dressing virago who stormed the literary salons of Paris and left a trail of dazed lovers in her wake. Baudelaire plumbed the depths of the revulsion that Sand inspired in some of her contemporaries: "The fact that some men have been able to become infatuated with that latrine is proof of the degradation of man in this century." Nietzsche dismissed Sand after her death as a lactating cow. Even Balzac, an admirer and a friend who described her as "great-hearted, generous, devout, and *chaste*," added that "she has all the main characteristics of a man; *ergo*, she is not a woman."

Sand eventually obtained a legal separation from her husband, Casimir Dudevant, but marriage had never impeded her adventures. Among her many lovers were the actress Marie Dorval, the writer Alfred de Musset, and most lastingly Chopin, with whom she lived in something resembling settled domesticity for eight years. Her children, Maurice and Solange, paid a price for these repeated domestic upheavals. They had to endure taunts about their rumored illegitimacy, and lurid press reports from their parents' separation hearing, and the frequent absences of their mother, who in their earliest years spent three months out of every six in Paris, a world away from them and the family estate at Nohant in Berry. Sand knew perfectly well the dangers of the course that she had chosen. "Society reserves vulgar punishments and insulting prescriptions for those of us who dare to brave it," she wrote.

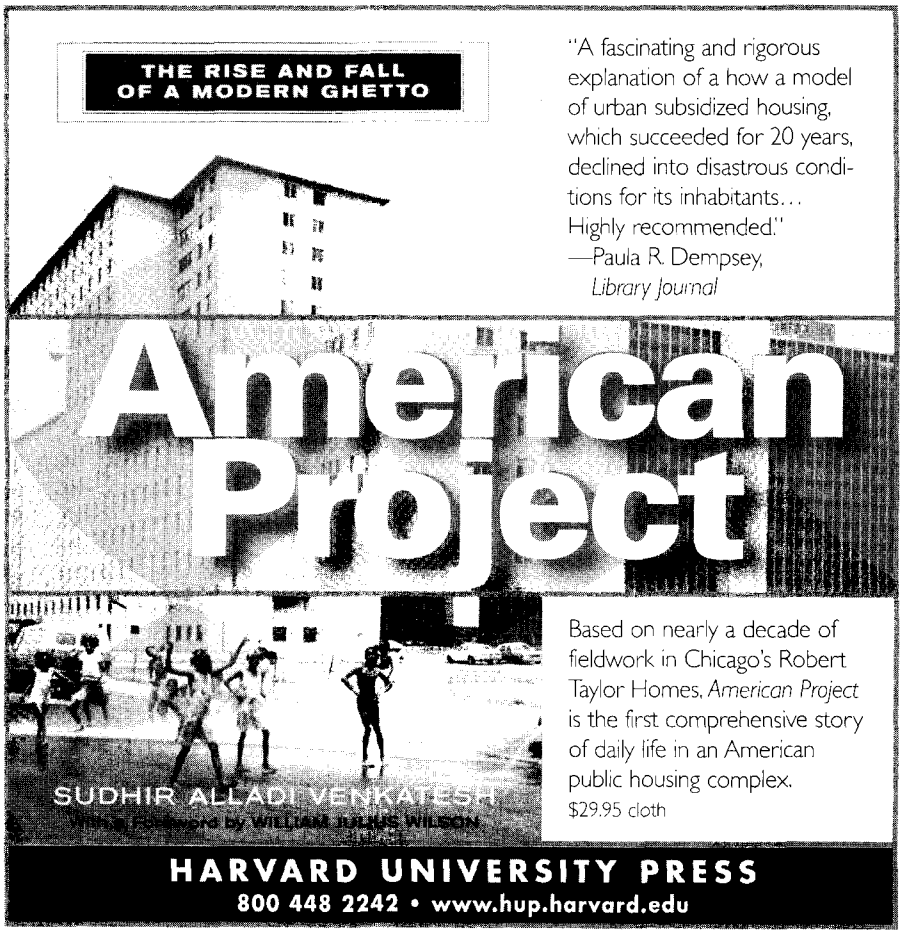
READ SIDE BY SIDE, these two biographies illuminate an entire epoch, though they shine more light on lifestyles than on literature. Between them, d'Agoult and Sand knew most of the famous composers, writers, painters, and politicians of their time. Their lives also intertwined at crucial moments, for Sand actively sought d'Agoult's friendship after the latter ran off with Liszt. Sand took her children to visit the errant couple in Chamonix in 1836, then moved into the same hotel in Paris and joined d'Agoult's literary salon, which soon drew Chopin, Meyerbeer, Heine, the wildly popular French novelist Eugène Sue, the socialist Pierre Leroux, and the Polish exiles Adam Mickiewicz and Count Albert Grzymala.

After three months in town and another three months with Sand in Nohant, d'Agoult and Liszt resumed their travels. D'Agoult confessed to her diary her relief that Liszt and Sand had not fallen in love, as she had feared they must. Sand appears to have been too busy to have given it much thought. She adored listening to Liszt play, claiming that when she did "all my pains are translated into poetry," but while Liszt and d'Agoult visited her in Nohant she finished one novel, started another, ended one love affair, and took up with a young actor.

For all that they shared in terms of obstacles to overcome and gossip to be endured, before long the friendship between the two women foundered on the rocks of envy, both personal and professional. Sand passed on all the juicy details of d'Agoult's difficulties with Liszt to Balzac, who used them in his novel *Béatrix*, and in revenge d'Agoult used the occasion of her first unsigned review to produce in 1841 a blistering attack on Sand's novel *Le Compagnon du tour de France*. In her memoirs, d'Agoult described Sand as "the uncontrolled child" and "the weak woman, weak even in her audacity, inconstant in her feelings, in her opinions, illogical in her life." Always more successful as a writer, and occupied with an even more colorful canvas of famous friends, Sand felt less need to pay d'Agoult back in kind.

At moments such as this one, where the two biographies can be directly compared, Belinda Jack's account of George Sand proves much more satisfying than Richard Bolster's account of Marie d'Agoult. Jack even makes better use of many passages in d'Agoult's memoirs and letters. Although Jack, like Bolster, extracts every possible nugget of personal information from the writings of her subject, using the literature to interpret the life rather than the other way around, she always demonstrates an eye for telling detail. She uses Sand's own words to carry the account along, and since Sand wrote so much and so eloquently, especially in her letters, Jack's pages engross the reader and carry her effortlessly down the stream of this remarkable life.

The most astounding aspect of the tale is Sand's seeming contemporaneity, which does not appear to be an artifice of Jack's fabrication. Sand never exhibits the strained preoccupation with respectability that characterized most women of her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time, and she never blamed anyone but herself for her choices. Describing her efforts to find a pursuit that would enable her to make a living—this when she was married and the mother of two children—she summed up the experience with her usual forthrightness: "I tried translating: it took too long ... pencil or watercolour portraits took only a few hours: I caught the likeness very well ... but they lacked originality." So she stuck with writing, though she assured a friend that "You're quite wrong by the way if you think that a *desire for glory* has gripped me. That's an expression that makes me collapse with laughter. I've a desire to make some money, and as there's no other way, aside from making a name as a writer, I'm trying to make one."

Although Bolster writes in greater detail about the break between Sand and d'Agoult, no doubt because it meant so much more to d'Agoult than it did to Sand, in general his prose is disappointingly distant and abstract, and he imputes motives to d'Agoult rather than drawing them out of either her own words or other contemporary sources. When armed rebels forced Charles X to abdicate and to flee in favor of his cousin Louis Philippe in 1830, Bolster claims that "Marie received many expressions of sympathy for her loss of position in the royal court, but she felt no real regret." We hear neither the expressions of sympathy nor the actual tone of Marie's reactions. Bolster insists that we rely on him to know Marie's feelings.

By 1848, d'Agoult had transformed herself into a republican political commentator, but Bolster's narrative gives the reader no inkling as to how this conversion took place. He depicts in some detail d'Agoult's budding friendship with Alphonse de Lamartine, the poet who became head of the provisional republican government in 1848, but he tells the reader nothing about d'Agoult's own changing political views. It hardly seems credible that d'Agoult became a republican only because she could not resist the influence of this charismatic man who deigned to grace her salon after she had separated definitively from Liszt.

BETWEEN 1804, THE year of Sand's birth (d'Agoult was born one year later), and the two women's deaths only weeks apart in 1876, France raced through a vertiginous succession of political regimes: a Napoleonic empire, a restored Bourbon monarchy, an Orleanist monarchy, a second republic, a second empire, and a third republic, in that order. Revolutions in 1830, 1848, and 1870–1871 produced soaring hopes for fundamental change that were soon dashed by political conflicts and deadly civil wars. In 1848, and again in 1871, thousands died in the streets of Paris for their revolutionary expectations. At the same time, Paris continued to draw to its cafés and garrets all those galvanized by artistic ambition or political frustration.

La Bohème was not just a figment of Murger's (and Puccini's) imagination. Liszt debuted in Paris in 1824 at the age of twelve, and when he quit his prodigy tour in disgust in 1827 he promptly installed himself in Montmartre, where he could smoke, drink, womanize, and feel melancholy to his heart's content, much as thousands have since then. Exiled Polish nationalists, Russian socialists, and early Communists (including Marx and Engels) flocked to Paris much like the aspiring young men in Balzac's novels, or for that matter like Balzac himself.

Though political turbulence and bohemian exhilaration opened up the range of individual choices available to these two women, they cannot explain why women writers in general exercised so little influence on French literary culture in the nineteenth century. George Sand stands alone as the only female novelist of note in her time, and even she excites more interest for her life than for her writing. Meanwhile, across the Channel, Sand's counterparts Jane Austen, the Brontë sisters, and George Eliot were making fundamental contributions to the development of the English novel. No French woman writer had a comparable impact in this period. Moreover, this lack of literary influence did not follow from the absence of a female literary tradition. From the days of Marguerite de Navarre in the sixteenth century until those of Germaine de Staël in the early nineteenth century, women writers played a prominent role in shaping the French novel. In 1697, Pierre Bayle remarked that "our best French novels for a long time have been written by women."

ON SECOND THOUGHT, however, perhaps those political upheavals and bohemian churnings do help to account for women's relative lack of literary influence in France, precisely because they offered French women options for expression that were not available in other places. Austen lived a life about as far removed from Sand's or d'Agoult's as is imaginable. She did not participate in politics; she hardly partook of life. Most of the excitement took place in the interior of her psyche. Literary influence, it would appear, does not correlate neatly with life experience, at least not for women. Although French women, like all women in the Western world, faced great legal restrictions on their personal freedom, as well as a lack of access to formal education, d'Agoult and Sand can hardly be said to have led typically confined Victorian lives. Their thrills were not limited to the psyche.

A surprising number of women similarly braved convention and the law in nineteenth-century Paris to participate in politics, to publish, and to pursue "free love." Constant political turmoil and the experimentalism of bohemian mores gave them—especially those who identified themselves as socialists—the opening that they needed, despite the overwhelming disapproval of most men. Flora Tristan, born just a year before Sand, got a legal separation from her husband after he shot her in a domestic quarrel, went off to England on her own to study the condition of the working class there, returned to proselytize for socialism in speaking tours around France, and published everything from stories of her travels in Peru to political tracts. She, too, produced a novel, but it drew less attention than her other writings. Apparently neither d'Agoult nor Sand knew Tristan or referred to her work.

D'Agoult supported the republican and democratic aspirations of the revolution of 1848, but rejected violence and stopped well short of socialism. Similarly, Sand enthusiastically endorsed the revolution of 1848 and the establishment of a republic, but she denied any affiliation with the kind of socialist ideas that inspired Tristan. The ferment in nineteenth-century France meant that there were real opportunities for women such as d'Agoult, Sand, and Tristan to join in shaping France's political future, yet these same opportunities did not translate into a lasting literary impact. Despite all her novels, which were often commercially and critically successful, Sand remains a writer of the second rank. She made the most money, after all, selling the rights to her autobiography, *Story of My Life*, the one work of hers that influenced writers such as Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, Edith Wharton, and Colette.

Neither d'Agoult nor Sand ever tried to explain why French women enjoyed so little literary influence. But their reticence on the subject is hardly surprising, since they spent their lives trying to make names for themselves, and to a great extent they succeeded. In 1848, in response to the revolution that overthrew Louis Philippe and installed a republic, d'Agoult published articles in which she asked why women had lost the ability to inspire men in politics. She recognized that women had few legal rights and little access to education, but she worried that the women of her generation lacked ambition, a charge it would be difficult to level against her individually. Neither she nor Sand endorsed feminism as an answer. When a

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group of feminists proposed Sand as a candidate for election to the National Assembly in 1848 (women could neither vote nor stand for office), she publicly rejected their efforts, even though she railed against women's unequal status and lack of opportunities. "I cannot condone," she insisted, "being taken without my consent as the standard-bearer of a female circle with which I have never had the slightest relation either pleasant or unpleasant."

As if taking a cue from their subjects, Bolster and Jack both ignore the broader context of women's writing in nineteenth-century France. Still, they provide a wealth of information about the specific obstacles faced by these individual women and their extraordinary struggles to overcome them. Where did these women get the courage to surmount objections such as those voiced by Tocqueville (who liked Sand when he met her, despite his preconceptions): "I had great prejudices against Mme Sand, because I detest women who write"? Money and social connections played a role, but so did a certain distance from proper society. D'Agoult came from a background of much greater wealth and better social connections than Sand, but her mother's German Lutheran background definitely set her apart in the conformist and devoutly Catholic atmosphere of post-Napoleonic France in which she grew up.

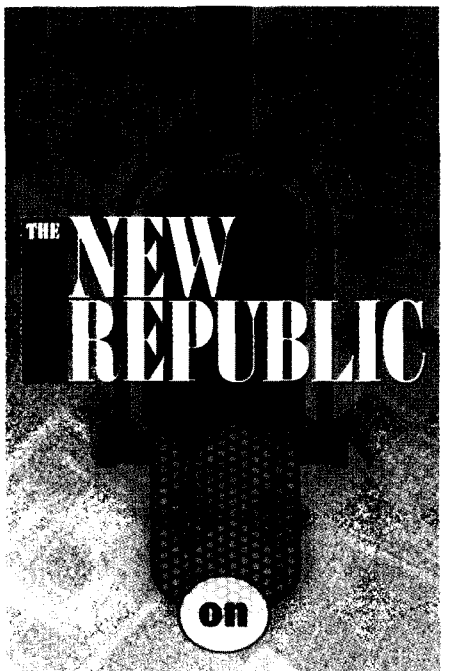
Marie's mother inherited a fortune on the death of her first husband, a wealthy German businessman, and then attracted the attentions of an aristocratic French Catholic army officer living in exile in Germany. In 1809, the couple moved from Frankfurt back to France to await Napoleon's fall, and after 1815, when the Bourbons regained the French throne, they joined royalist aristocratic circles, where Marie met her future husband. Her father died in 1819, leaving her in the care of a mother who herself had never entirely fit in. When Marie ran off with Liszt, her mother hoped at first that she would come to her senses, but when her daughter persisted in her unconventional course, she learned to live with the new situation. Even after she separated from Liszt years later, Marie had the means to establish her own household in Paris, complete with cook, groom, and valet in livery. Hosting a successful salon required no less.

Sand's background left much more to be desired. Her father came from a long line of illegitimate progeny of the great, going back to the king of Poland. When her mother met her father, she had raised herself only high enough to become the mistress of a general; but that was apparently good enough for Sand's father, who married the girl over the violent objections of his family. Sand's mother had already given birth to two illegitimate children by previous lovers, and her father had a boy by a former liaison. When Sand was five, her father died after being thrown from his horse. Her paternal grandmother granted her mother an allowance and demanded in exchange that she remove herself to Paris and leave little Aurore at Nohant.

An enthusiastic devotee of Voltaire and Rousseau, the grandmother hired a tutor for Aurore and her half-brother, and insisted that they be educated alike. After spending two years at a convent school in Paris in her early teens, Aurore returned to Nohant, where she learned to ride horses, dressed in male attire, read philosophy and literature with her grandmother, and began to write. Her grandmother died when she was seventeen, and a few months later Aurore married a military officer, the illegitimate son of a nobleman and a servant. Within six years, she had had two children and her first extra-marital lover. More important for her future, she had her grandmother's considerable fortune and her house at Nohant, which the court granted her upon her official separation from her husband in 1836. For the rest of her long and tempestuous life, Nohant provided her only real anchor of continuity.

The barest recounting of such lives inevitably explodes all the usual expectations about the experience of women before their legal liberation in the twentieth century. Even though divorce was impossible in France between 1816 and 1884, and the law officially condemned women to lives of subservience and dependence, some women nonetheless exercised nearly full control over their own existence, if only *faute de mieux*. D'Agoult and Sand constructed their own lives out of the materials that were forced upon them by the conventions and the laws of the time. They married because marriage was the only option other than the convent, but when their marriages proved too constricting, they escaped. They had children because women had children, whether they wanted them or not. Although their relations with their children were often problematic, their children ended up fiercely loyal to them. Even d'Agoult's daughter by her husband Charles, the daughter whom she left to run off with Liszt, reconciled with her mother and remained one of her closest confidantes.

Marie d'Agoult and George Sand did not set out originally to brave social expectations and to endure quite so much scandal, gossip, or moralizing back-biting. Still, for whatever combination of reasons



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of background and personality, they did aim to make names for themselves. Sand refused to give her choices any rigid formula: "Me, I have no theories. I live my life asking questions." These women kept asking those questions all their lives, and they managed along the way to ride out the waves thrown up against them by life's hopes and disappointments. As Sand wrote to her friend Flaubert, "You should let the wind stir your strings a little." The wind certainly stirred hers. ■

All That Glitters

By ADAM KIRSCH

Collected Poems by James Merrill edited by J. D. McClatchy and Stephen Yenser

(Alfred A. Knopf, 885 pp., $35)

Familiar Spirits: A Memoir of James Merrill and David Jackson by Alison Lurie

(Viking, 181 pp., $22.95)

PROUST'S MADELEINE HAS become the popular shorthand for his novel, the Atlantis of memory resurfacing after a single taste of a cookie dipped in tea. In fact, Proust's metaphor for remembering is much more arduous:

> I place in position before my mind's eye the still recent taste of that first mouthful, and I feel something start within me, something that leaves its resting place and attempts to rise, something that has been embedded like an anchor at a great depth; I do not know yet what it is, but I can feel it mounting slowly; I can measure the resistance, I can hear the echo of great spaces traversed.... Ten times over I must essay the task, must lean down over the abyss.

It is instructive to compare James Merrill's rival metaphor for the process that turns life into art, in his poem "For Proust":

> What happened is becoming literature.
>
> Feverish in time, if you suspend the task,
> An old, old woman shuffling in to draw
> Curtains, will read a line or two,
> withdraw.
> The world will have put on a thin gold
> mask.

ADAM KIRSCH is a poet and critic living in New York City.

The poet has made the novelist over in his own image, his very different image: not an anchor but a mask, not the depths but the surface. So perfectly does this image of gilding capture Merrill's artistic goals that he resorts to it, or to versions of it, many times in his poetry: "A changing light is deepening, is changing/To a gilt ballroom chair a chair/Bound to break under someone before long"; "under water all/Becomes a silvery weightless miracle"; "I saw the parents and the child/At their window, gleaming like fruit/With evening's mild gold leaf."

Reading such lines, it is easy to see why Merrill has often been dismissed as a merely decorative poet, an aesthete playing with form. The charge seems all the more credible because of his great wealth: in the old American contest between paleface and redskin, Merrill's money and status place him firmly in the first camp. The son of a founder of Merrill Lynch, he was as close as his time could show to an American aristocrat, more privileged in any material sense than New England scions such as Henry James or Robert Lowell. (It is suggestive of his family's position that, in "Days of 1935," he remembers fantasizing, as an eight-year-old, about being held for ransom like the Lindbergh baby.)

Merrill passed unscathed through a Depression childhood, and in his adult life he enjoyed the fruits of his father's labor: leisure, travel, beautiful homes. In her brief new memoir of Merrill and his companion David Jackson—a small but honest tribute that is not afraid to reveal the tensions that troubled their long friendship—Alison Lurie remembers the air of moneyed ease that surrounded the pair in the 1950s: "I loved visiting Stonington. To go to 107 Water Street from a house cluttered with shabby, worn furniture and toys and dirty laundry and the cries of children was like being transported to another world: one not only more attractive, but more luxurious, calm, voluptuous; more free and leisured—a world in which the highest goods were friendship, pleasure, and art."

"Luxurious" is also an apt description of Merrill's *Collected Poems*, a large volume that brings together twelve published collections, as well as some previously uncollected poems and translations. The book is a testament to Merrill's unwavering sense of calling, to his patience and his integrity: in a life in which anything was possible, he wanted only to write poetry. It is also a reminder that, from the death of Elizabeth Bishop in 1979 until his own death in 1995, there was no American poet more artistically serious than Merrill. He has made the perilous crossing into posterity, and he has survived.

If the fact of Merrill's achievement is clear, however, its exact quality and its proper stature are not at all clear. The fear of giving hostages to the Philistines has prevented a recognition that his poetry is, finally and even consciously, superficial; it is profoundly concerned with surfaces. This is its strength and its considerable limitation. This fact of Merrill's art is often euphemized by calling him a comic poet or a Mozartian poet. But such appellations are misleading if they suggest that Merrill was artistically happy, that his gifts found free and ideal expression in his chosen forms and subjects. The *Collected Poems* only intermittently gives the sense of a complete achievement. Like a Renaissance fresco painter, Merrill often seems to lay his brilliant colors onto a weak and crumbling material; his themes are rarely equal to the language in which he clothes them. He presents the spectacle, rare in the last two centuries, of a serious poet whose language outstrips what he has to say.

To appreciate the limits of Merrill's achievement, it is necessary to understand the substance of that achievement. We might begin with one of the most notable features of this big book, Merrill's puns. He ties hundreds of comic knots in the English language:

> My father, who had flown in World War I,
> Might have continued to invest his life
> In cloud banks....

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I'm at an airport, waiting. The scar itches.
Carving, last month I nearly removed
my thumb.
Where was my mind? Lapses like this
become
Standard practice. Not all of them
leave me in stitches.
On the one hand, the power and the gory
Details....

The god at last indifferent
And she no longer chaste
but continent.

In life, the pun receives the tribute of a groan; we feel that there is something cheap about drawing our attention to the arbitrary resemblances and double meanings of words. "Continent" means both "a landmass" and "sexually controlled," but we learn nothing about the world from this accidental fact. Yet it is just this arbitrariness that makes Merrill's puns genuinely poetic: they willfully divert our attention from the signified to the sign, to the materiality of language. If language were entirely transparent, if there were one word per object, there could be no poetry; it is in the resistance or the excess of the medium that poetic felicity resides.

In this sense, the pun is really just the extreme case of a playfulness at work in all verse. As the eighteenth-century poet John Dennis wrote, "Rime may not so absurdly be said to be the Pun of Harmony." Rhyme asserts that two words do sound the same, just as puns remind us that one word does have two meanings, regardless of logic. When rhyme-words are extremely disparate in meaning or etymology, they come to seem like puns on one another, as in *Don Juan*. Or as in Merrill: "peacocks/Orthodox," "sacerdotal/Aristotle"; "one of us/homunculus." He is so much under the spell of sound that his poems occasionally lose themselves in little epiphanies of assonance, as in a well-known passage from "Flying from Byzantium":

Up spoke the man in the moon:
What does that moan mean?
The plane was part of the plan.
Why gnaw the bone of a boon?
I said with spleen, "Explain
These nights that tie me in knots,
All drama and no dream,
While you lampoon my pain."

Merrill takes an almost mischievous pleasure in showing that sonic patterning can be taken to such an extreme while still making sense. His metrical repertory is extraordinarily wide: the elaborate stanzas of his early work, sonnet sequences, short epigrams, narrative couplets. (Almost the only thing that Merrill did not write was actual songs—an interesting difference from Auden, whom he otherwise resembles in this respect.) He gives the reader a sense of linguistic riches so vast that he can strew them carelessly about.

But Merrill's very liberality can be a flaw if we begin to suspect that, like a Weimar fortune, it is a result of the cheapness of the currency. A poet gives the impression of strength only if his linguistic powers seem to meet and to overcome the challenge of a significant statement. Simple things said simply are graceful; difficult things said with difficulty are impressive; but simple things said with difficulty are merely showy. At times, Merrill consciously tests this imbalance, as when he describes urinating in *The Book of Ephraim*:

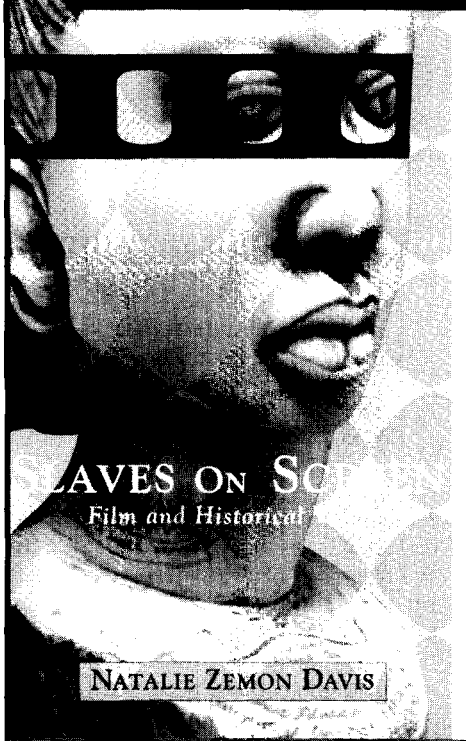
When the urge
Comes to make water, a thin brass-hot
stream,
Sails out into the updraft, spattering
One impotent old tree that shakes its
claws.
The droplets atomize, evaporate
To dazzlement a blankness overdusts
Pale blue, then paler blue. It stops at
nothing.

The passage is carefully constructed, from the striking adjective "brass-hot" to the concluding pun. What it lacks is any kind of surprise, any sense that the poet is urging his subject beyond itself; and absent this pressure, it is just an unusually pretty description of pissing. And the prettiness is complacent, as we can see in Merrill's "dazzlement": the word is too pleased with itself, with the mild frisson of being applied to something so trivial.

Moments such as this are very common in the *Collected Poems*. Merrill often seems to alter Dickinson's advice: he tells the facts, but tells them slant. We can see a minor instance in a line of "From the Cupola": "Old headlines mend a missing pane." Merrill is describing a window covered with newspaper, but through synecdoche he creates a little puzzle, an easily solved obliquity. Elsewhere the same habit of mind turns whole poems into pegs on which to hang the poetry, as in "Arabian Night":

Features unseen embers and tongs once
worried
bright as brass, cool, trim, of a depth to
light the
way at least who, trusting mirages,
find in
them the oasis,
what went wrong? You there in the
mirror, did our
freshest page get sent to the Hall of
Cobwebs?

SLAVES ON SCREEN



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Or had Rime's Emir all along been merely
after your body?

As a description of looking into a mirror, this seems grotesquely overdone. It is, indeed, a kind of Gongorism, reminiscent of Cowley or Crashaw, but more likely showing the influence of French Symbolist poetry. This is one of the many occasions in Merrill when, as he writes in "Verse for Urania,"

such considerations as rhyme and meter
Prevail, it might be felt, at the expense
Of meaning....

To object to such a style is not, I think, an objection to beautiful writing. It is an objection to decadent writing. The distinction must be maintained, because Merrill himself often elided it; he often wrote as if the only argument to be made against his manner of complexity were a plebeian political attack. We find such a self-defense in section "W" of *The Book of Ephraim*, the first part of his Ouija-inspired epic, *The Changing Light at Sandover*. In terza rima, Merrill relates a Dantesque meeting with Wendell, a painter whose subjects are "ill-knit/Mean-mouthed, distrustful" faces. Merrill asks why he creates such ugly portraits:

"I guess that's sort of how
I see mankind,"
Says Wendell. "Doomed,
sick, selfish, dumb as
shit.
They talk about how
decent, how refined—
All it means is, they can
afford somehow
To watch what's happening,
and not to mind."
Our famous human dignity? I-Thou?
The dirty underwear of overkill.
Those who'll survive it were rethought
by Mao
Decades past, as a swarming blue anthill.
"The self was once," I put in, "a great,
great
Glory." And he: "Oh sure. But is it still?"

Merrill presents himself as the defender of aristocratic humanism against the modern tide of ugliness, brutality, mass thought. As he writes in another poem, "Form's what affirms."

Yet if we ask what Merrill's form affirms, the answer can only be: form itself. His idea of art is a throwback, it often seems, to the 1890s, to *l'art pour l'art*. It is not surprising to read, in "Days of 1941 and '44," that his first literary enthusiasms were for Wilde and Baudelaire:

But viewed from deep in my initial
Aesthetic phase, brought like a
lukewarm bath to
Fizzy life by those mauve salts,

Paradises (and if artificial
So much the better) promised more

James Merrill and David Jackson
by David Schorr for The New Republic

than Matthew
Arnold. Faith rose dripping from
the false.

Merrill's juvenile "alliterations courtesy of Wilde" were shed over time, but the Wildean idea of beauty remained. Merrill instinctively thinks of the beautiful as though it were an iridescence that can be peeled off any art object. There is a revealing moment in his prose memoir, *A Different Person*, when he writes of his discovery of early Christian mosaics in Ravenna:

The profusion of motifs, their vigor by
now a reflex long past thought, gives out
a sense of peace and plenty in the lee of
history's howling gale. It isn't the creeds
or crusades they tell of, but the relative
eternity of villas, interior decoration,
artisans.... While empires fell offstage,
these happy solutions to the timeless
problems of scale and coherence
stretched, like flowers to the light,
wherever a patron beckoned.

It is not the history, or the symbolism, or indeed the meaning of the mosaics that interests Merrill, but their "solutions" to technical "problems."

To defend the aesthetic in these terms is, ironically, to abandon what is most genuinely beautiful in poetry. The particular heroism of modern poets since Wordsworth lies in the courage of their self-scrutiny, and in their boldness in expressing what they have learned. To this end, what Leavis called "heuristic poetry" uses form in a destructive-creative way, breaking down conventional or received modes of expression in order to build up new, more accurate modes. Merrill is not a poet of discovery, in this sense. His idea of beauty is static, exterior, and therefore basically conservative.

He provides a perfect emblem of this sort of beauty in "Charles on Fire," where a glass of "amber liquor" is set aflame:

A blue flame, gentle, beautiful,
came, went
Above the surface. In a hush
that fell
We heard the vessel crack.
The contents drained
As who should step down from
a crystal coach.
Steward of spirits, Charles's glistening
hand
All at once gloved itself in eeriness.

This, of course, is another version of the "thin gold mask"—a superficial glamour. It is significant that Merrill describes the flame as "beautiful," a word that has been steadfastly avoided by most modern poets, on the assumption that real beauty does not need an epithet. But the tag is necessary in this case, because the phenomenon described is inherently nugatory: it means nothing, it discovers nothing. That is, it is not truly beautiful, with the exigent beauty of the best poetry; it is only pretty,

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or "interesting," which is a purely aesthetic category.

Merrill's style is not able to create a more primordial beauty. The deficiency becomes clear whenever he attempts large statement:

> Tell me something, Art.
> You know what it's like
> Awake in your dry hell
> Of volatile synthetic solvents.
> Won't you help us brave the elements
> Once more, of terror, anger, love?

This passage, from "Dreams About Clothes," cannot vivify the old abstractions of art, terror, anger, love. They are moved about like familiar counters, and so the poet, almost in spite of himself, can only treat them ironically. And we can observe the same limitation in "Farewell Performance," in which the scattering of a friend's ashes is compared to a concert:

> Back they come. How you would have
> loved it. We in
> turn have risen. Pity and terror done
> with,
> programs furled, lips parted, we jostle
> forward
> eager to hail them....

Pity and terror, the Aristotelian formula, is in silent quotation marks; the emotion is alluded to rather than represented. It is as though Merrill's love for the particular has left him helpless before the universal, whose re-creation surely is the highest attainment of poetry.

When the valuable is identified with the rare and the precious, rather than with the common and the profound, it makes sense that the poet will see himself as addressing a select audience. Merrill was an exceptionally generous person (Lurie writes that "no one will ever know the extent" of his benefactions), but in his poetry he has an exaggerated sense of his own particularity, his separation from the rest of the world, which can border on snobbery. In "Tony: Ending the Life," he writes of

> The longing to lead everybody's life
> —Lifelong daydream of precisely those
> Whom privilege or talent set apart:
> How to atone for the achieved
> uniqueness?

Nothing could be more alien to the self-conception of the "heuristic" poet, who is essentially representative of mankind, even if he lives among them as a stranger. In lines such as these, one suspects that the idea of material privilege has infected the idea of artistic talent, which is not a privilege but a responsibility.

MERRILL'S FEELING OF exclusivity, his sense of being "set apart," can be deeply unattractive. Consider "Bronze," a poem about a friend who has died, leaving a house behind:

> His last will
> Left it intact to Mario the butler,
> So long devoted and his brood so great.
> The house sighed. It had entertained
> the subtler
> Forms of discourse and behavior.

We see it also in another form in *A Different Person*, when Merrill reflects on his love affairs with Greek boys, conducted over decades of part-time residence in Athens.

> And the Greek youths we take up with?
> Don't they have personalities themselves,
> and histories? No doubt; yet it seems to
> us that they primarily have humors, choleric or melancholy, sanguine or phlegmatic, as in pre-Renaissance psychology.
> Also our friends strike us as creations of
> their Mediterranean society far more
> than we are of ours....

But nowhere is this attitude more evident than in *The Changing Light at Sandover*, which purports to document metaphysical truths communicated via a Ouija board to Merrill and David Jackson. As Merrill began "talking" with a spirit named Ephraim, Alison Lurie looked on with dismay: "From the beginning I didn't care for Ephraim. He was a part of David and Jimmy I hadn't met head-on before, and instantly felt estranged from. He was foreign, frivolous, intermittently dishonest, selfishly sensual, and cheerfully, coldly promiscuous." Indeed, *The Book of Ephraim* presents a depressingly narcissistic vision of the world to come.

Merrill allows that Ephraim might have been "a projection / Of what already burned, at some obscure / Level or another, in our skulls"; but it is hardly reassuring to think that passages like the following are addressed by Merrill to himself:

> take our teacher told us
> from sensual pleasure only what will not
> during it be even partly spoiled by fear
> of losing too much
> This was the tone
> We trusted most, a smiling Hellenistic
> Lightness from beyond the grave. Each
> shaft
> Feathered by head-turning flattery:
> Long b4 the fortunate conjunction
> (David's and mine) allowed me to get
> through
> may I say weve had our eyes on u
> —On our kind hearts, good sense,
> imagination,
> Talents!

The Book of Ephraim contains some of Merrill's finest writing, but the system that it is meant to expound is intellectually unacceptable and imaginatively complacent. It is not necessary, of course, to write a long poem in order to be a major poet; but there are qualities of the major poet whose absence from Merrill's work is confirmed in his long poem. There is more discovery, and therefore more beauty, in the brief and homely *Collected Poems* of Larkin than in the many golden pages of Merrill.

Still, Merrill is an undisputed master of certain modes. The aesthetic-aristocratic irony that freezes his largest statements is very rewarding when he writes about his childhood or his love affairs, subjects on which many poets are hysterically single-minded. Indeed, it is not his style, but the tone that his style creates, that is Merrill's greatest achievement. The man whom we come to know in the *Collected Poems* is witty, clever, cool, urbane; he meets suffering with a self-mocking fortitude. The resigned "*Ja, ja*" of Strauss's Marschallin is Merrill's characteristic response to tragedy:

> Change of scene that might, I thought,
> be tried
> First, instead of outright suicide.
> (Looked back on now, what caused my
> sufferings?

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Mere thwarted passion—commonest
of things.)

In fact, some of Merrill's best poems are about opera. As he relates in the sequence "Matinées," attending a performance of the *Ring* was the beginning of his aesthetic education. Opera taught him that emotion can be performed, that it can be simultaneously sincere and parodic. The artistic consciousness is inevitably a double consciousness:

The point thereafter was to arrange for
one's
Own chills and fever, passions and
betrayals,
Chiefly in order to make song of them.

The image of the opera singer, whose rehearsed emotion is paradoxically more real than actual feeling, returns in "The *Ring* Cycle," a sequence from *A Scattering of Salts*, Merrill's last collection:

Brünnhilde confronts Siegfried. That is
to say,
Two singers have been patiently
rehearsed
So that their tones and attitudes convey
Outrage and injured innocence....

MERRILL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL sequences—"Matinées," "The Broken Home," "The Thousand and Second Night," "Lost in Translation," the series of poems titled "Days of ...," "Clearing the Title," and a few others—are the height of his art. Here Merrill finds a subject important enough to compel interest but not so important as to resist irony; and the pressure of his narrative restrains his tendency to the baroque. These are the poems that will be read when Merrill the individual is forgotten.

Perhaps the best of these sequences is "Family Week at Oracle Ranch," from *A Scattering of Salts*. It recounts the poet's trip to a New Age recovery facility to visit his lover, who was a patient there. Here the disparity between complex language and primal feeling becomes Merrill's explicit subject:

Simplicities. Just seven words—AFRAID,
HURT, LONELY, etc.—to say it with.
Shades of the first watercolor box
(I "felt blue," I "saw red")....

While the connoisseur of feeling throws
up his hands:
Used to depicting personal anguish

With a full palette—hues, oils, glazes,
thinner—
He stares into these withered wells
and feels,

Well... SAD and ANGRY?

For a poet so enamored of eloquence, therapeutic language represents a radical deprivation; yet this very loss allows Merrill a way around the ironic self-awareness that his language enforces. It is the first time that Merrill appears discomfited by language, by the disjunction between eloquence and communication. That it came at the very end of his life makes it especially poignant, a token of possibilities never to be realized.

Reading the *Collected Poems* leaves no doubt that Merrill was one of the finest American poets of the last half-century. His achievement was all the more valuable because he was strong in areas where most of his contemporaries were weak. Yet the book also leaves the suspicion that Merrill's major work was left unwritten. How glad we would be to have, instead of *The Changing Light at Sandover*, his verse autobiography. It would probably not have been a profound exploration of memory or psychology, like *The Prelude*, or like Proust; but it would have been sparkling, sociable, eighteenth-century, like Pope.

Indeed, the Augustan age would have been the perfect setting for Merrill's gifts. He was meant for an era in which the poet could take much for granted—his audience, his principles, his forms—and could devote himself to the perfection of what he received. One can well imagine Merrill going to court and to the coffeehouses, writing racy verse epistles, and turning his couplets to a glittering sheen. There would have been no question, in those days, of his poetry being too beautiful to be great. ■

The vivid fabrications of a great elegist.

The Roth March

By MICHAEL ANDRÉ BERNSTEIN

I.

ON FEBRUARY 28, 1938, two weeks after Hitler had summoned Austrian Chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg to a meeting at Berchtesgaden and bullied him into making concessions that underlined Austria's inability to resist German annexation ("You can't seriously believe that you could delay me for even half an hour" is among the mildest of the threats that the Führer is said to have yelled at Schuschnigg during their "negotiations"), an impoverished and terminally alcoholic Jewish writer was making his way back to Vienna from his self-imposed Parisian exile. Joseph Roth undertook the trip at the express command of Otto von Hapsburg, the eldest son of the last emperor, Charles I, and the claimant to the Austro-Hungarian throne. His mission was nothing less than to persuade Schuschnigg to resign immediately and to turn over (to "restore") the government to its rightful Hapsburg ruler. With the imperial dynasty re-established in Vienna, the Legitimists argued, Hitler would feel compelled to withdraw his troops from the border, and the security not only of Austria, but also of Europe itself, would be preserved. In the event, Roth got as far as a meeting with the Viennese chief of police, who advised him for his own safety to leave the country on the next train. For once Roth listened to reason, and he managed to return to Paris three days before the first Nazi troops poured over the Austrian border and marched unopposed into the capital.

MICHAEL ANDRÉ BERNSTEIN teaches at the University of California, Berkeley. His latest book is *Five Portraits: Modernism and the Imagination in Twentieth-Century German Writing* (Northwestern University Press).

THE WANDERING JEWS
by Joseph Roth
translated by
Michael Hofmann
(W.W. Norton & Co.,
146 pp., $19.95)

That a man of Roth's background should have volunteered enthusiastically for this fantastic and dangerous mission is astonishing. And it is no less astonishing that the reactionary circle around the Hapsburg pretender sent a Galician Jew and former left-wing journalist who had signed some of his early articles "the red Joseph," a man with no family connections, private resources, or diplomatic credentials, to be its standard-bearer during Austria's greatest crisis since World War I. For a brief moment, the persistent Hapsburg fantasy of continuing to exercise a

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decisive influence on European events meshed perfectly with the private mythomania of a Jewish writer from what had been the Dual Monarchy's easternmost province. It would be hard to calibrate whose illusions were more deeply implicated in Roth's hopeless journey.

Only a year later, the forty-four-year-old Roth was dead of complications brought on by years of alcoholism. At his funeral, on May 30, 1939, the issue of his multiple and contradictory loyalties was vividly dramatized. He had once described himself as "a Frenchman from the east, a humanist, a rationalist with religious faith, a Catholic with a Jewish brain, a true revolutionary," and each of these constituencies was represented at the cemetery. In addition to many notable émigré writers and artists, the imperial aide-de-camp Count Trautmannsdorff came bearing a wreath in black and yellow, the colors of the Hapsburgs, with a card signed simply "Otto."

When Trautmannsdorff began to talk about Roth as "a true fighter for the Monarchy" and invoked "His Majesty, Otto of Austria," the sizable left-wing contingent at the funeral tried to shout him down. Shortly afterwards, a fresh disturbance occurred when a group of Eastern European Jews protested the effort by a Catholic priest to lead the funeral service. Amid this confusion, Roth's close friend Joseph Gottfarstein, a Yiddish journalist and Talmudic scholar, decided it would be impossible to go ahead with his plan to recite the Mourner's Kaddish. In effect, each of the voices present succeeded in drowning out the others; and it was largely the disorder that those in attendance subsequently remembered. Yet the chaos at Roth's graveside is, in a sense, an accurate externalization of his inner turmoil; and one way to understand his increasingly fervent identification with the myth of the Hapsburg dynasty is as part of a quest for some stable hierarchy and some fixed standard of conduct that might bring order to his painful self-division.

Frozen in a nostalgic myth, the exiled Hapsburgs and Roth were such a perfect match because it was precisely as the incarnation of a lost stability that the dynasty sought to represent itself, and on which it based its claims to continuing political relevance. In accepting Roth's professions of loyalty, the Hapsburgs underwrote the idealized image that Roth sought of both his own and his country's past, and they could do so on terms that were fundamental to their own longstanding sense of dynastic identity.

Even Franz Josef had understood that in order to rule an ethnically and culturally heterogeneous empire, a multi-national kingdom, the Hapsburgs needed to be seen as standing above the profound differences that divided their subjects into rival constituencies. After the collapse of the Dual Monarchy in 1918, some of the famous Hapsburg luck that had once brought sovereignty over large sections of Europe and the New World survived intact, but only in the realm of romantic wish-fulfillment. What had originated during the interwar years as the sectarian article of faith of a few Legitimists—the notion that the Hapsburgs actually offered a viable bulwark against both Nazism and communism—gradually evolved into a sentimental *Mitteleuropa* cliché of the postwar era, one of the collateral benefits of which was to allow Austrians to substitute a vague monarchical nostalgia for any serious confrontation with their own problematic history.

Lost causes have all the glamour of a counter-life in which no pedestrian decisions or concrete choices are required. When they come cloaked in the costumes of a vanished aristocratic glory, such causes provide their adherents with something akin to a self-awarded patent of nobility, a re-fashioning of their own prosaic stories into a heroic legend, all the more distinguished for its tinge of refined melancholy. From Highland tales of "the Stuart King over the Water" to Margaret Mitchell's sentimentalization of the Old South, there is a family resemblance among all these narratives; and if they inevitably flirt with kitsch, it is worth remembering that in the hands of Stendhal or Faulkner they have also helped produce some of our culture's enduring masterpieces.

The most literarily gifted "banished leaders," such as Napoleon or Trotsky, set about creating their own legends the moment they lost power, rewriting much of what had marked their actual careers. Lacking similar talent, men such as Otto von Hapsburg were dependent on the myth-making capacity of their adherents to re-invent their family stories for the next generation. In the unlikely figure of Joseph Roth, the dynasty found one of its most effective elegists; and he made the Hapsburgs' downfall the subject of his finest writing.

II.

FOR AMBITIOUS PROVINCIAL intellectuals—especially the Austrian Jews among them—re-inventing oneself was usually the first of many enforced career moves. But even in an epoch when self-invention was commonplace, Roth enacted the trajectory with a zeal that made it clear that more than merely professional calculation was at stake. As an adult, he circulated countless different versions of his origins, all of

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them more or less fictional. Even when the bare truth would have made a better story, Roth distorted and mythologized until his compulsion to spin fables about himself became more interesting than any of the actual stories. Until the publication in Germany in 1974 of David Bronsen's groundbreaking study, *Josef Roth: Eine Biographie*, most accounts of Roth, even those in standard literary histories, simply recycled one or another of his fabricated lives. (An English version of Bronsen's essential book has been promised for years.)

Roth liked to claim that he came from Schwabendorf, a name that suggested one of the German settlements in Galicia. In truth, he was born just outside Brody, a decidedly non-Germanic Galician town at the farthest edge of the empire, less than ten kilometers from the Russian border and almost eight hundred kilometers from Vienna. In 1894, when Roth was born, Brody's population was more than seventy percent Jewish; and so he grew up speaking German, Yiddish, and Polish. When he matriculated at the University of Vienna in 1914, he was still using his full name, Moses Joseph Roth, and would continue to do so into his twenties.

His father, Nachum, had been raised by Hasidim, and was employed as a grain buyer for a Hamburg firm when he married Roth's mother. Not long before his son's birth, Nachum suffered a mental breakdown on a business trip, and spent the rest of his life in the care of a wonder rabbi in Poland without ever seeing his family again. Later Roth invented a series of imaginary identities for his absent father, claiming variously that he had been a highly ranked civil servant, a distinguished career officer, a painter, a drunkard and a bon vivant who had deserted his wife, even a well-known Viennese munitions manufacturer who happened to have the same name.

Roth was raised by his mother and his maternal grandfather, and throughout all of his subsequent wanderings he seems to have stayed in touch with his relatives in Brody. Indeed, the people, the landscape, and the habits of his native region are recognizable throughout Roth's writings. The description of Carl Joseph's garrison town in *The Radetzky March* is a direct transposition of his memories of Brody:

> Nature had forged endless horizons for these dwellers on the frontier, drawing around them a mighty circle of green forests and blue hills. They ... dealt in coral for the peasant girls of nearby villages, and for those other peasants over the border, on Russian soil, they dealt in feathers for feather beds, in tobacco, in horsehair, in bar silver, in jewelry, in Chinese tea, in fruit from the south, in cattle and horses, poultry and eggs, fish and vegetables, jute and wool, butter and cheese, woodlands and fields, Italian marble, human hair from China for making wigs, raw-silk and finished-silk merchandise, Manchester cotton, and Brussels lace, galoshes from Moscow, Viennese linen, lead from Bohemia....

COURTESY KIEPENHEUER & WITSCH

Stefan Zweig and Joseph Roth in Ostende, 1936

> The people in this district were swamp-begotten. For evil swamps lay far and wide to either side of the highroad and over the whole face of the land. Swamps that spawned frogs and fever, deceptive grass, dreadful enticements to a dreadful death for the unsuspecting stranger.... But all who had been born here were familiar with the malignity of the marshland, and they themselves were tinged with this same malignity. In spring and summer, the air was thick with the deep and endless croaking of the frogs. Under the sky, equally jubilant larks rejoiced. It was an untiring dialogue between sky and marshland.

It is no small part of Roth's stylistic accomplishment that the tone and the texture of his novels, from early books about returning war veterans such as *Rebellion*, *Hotel Savoy* (both from 1924) and *Flight Without End* (1927), in which there is no trace of nostalgia for the vanished empire, to the late Hapsburg threnodies such as *The Radetzky March* (1932) and *The Emperor's Tomb* (1938), persuaded readers that the writer possessed an intimate knowledge of the imperial army and its debacles during World War I. Roth did everything he could to feed such an impression, never mentioning that his actual postings were first to the press corps and then to the censorship department, where he was charged with reading letters from soldiers in the ranks.

Although he never achieved officer rank and never took part in any battle, Roth used to recount stories of his service as a decorated lieutenant who had narrowly survived enemy fire at the front and then managed to escape from military imprisonment in Russia. Even when he was writing for socialist newspapers such as the Viennese *Arbeiterzeitung* (*Workers' Newspaper*) or the German *Vorwärts* (*Forward*), which would have applauded such a position, Roth did not reveal that in 1914 he had been a pacifist who regarded the war as a conspiracy desired only by the ruling class and the General Staff. After the war, Roth continued to dress in the distinctive, outmoded clothing adopted by former commissioned officers as a sign of their continuing loyalty to the emperor and his army.

No doubt Roth's lifelong habit of constantly inventing new and more distinguished versions of his past helps to explain all these obfuscations, but they also served a crucial literary end. World War I, the great inaugural cataclysm of the twentieth century, installed in its aftermath what one might call an absolutization of trauma; and a corollary of this phenomenon was the elevation of the survivor-witness into a figure of immense cultural authority. The impulse to grant authenticity only to those who have endured the trauma themselves is one of our epoch's most durable and influential principles of the imagination. Although it is now associated primarily with the Shoah, it was first elaborated in the testimonial literature about World War I. The years following the end of the war saw the rise of a new kind of documentary literature, the

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"war memoir," in which writers sought to bear witness to their personal experience of its unspeakable misery. Only someone who had personally endured those horrors was presumed to be entitled to write about them, and Roth's initial journalistic and literary career depended upon his ability to claim such first-hand experience.

Roth's success at creating a lasting image of the final years of imperial Austria has obscured just how tenuous his own experience of Franz Josef's Vienna really was. He reached the capital as another gifted and money-less provincial in 1913, enrolled at the university just as the war was about to break out, and joined the army in 1916, three months before the death of the old emperor. The prosperous high-bourgeois world that Stefan Zweig memorably called "the Golden Age of Security," when "everything in our almost thousand-year-old Austrian monarchy seemed based on permanency and the State was the chief guarantor of this stability," corresponded to very little in Roth's experience. Unlike Zweig, Robert Musil, or Arthur Schnitzler, Roth was never a part of the social and cultural life of Hapsburg Vienna; and his nostalgia often feels lonelier and more fable-like than theirs precisely because he was mourning not a world once solidly possessed and then lost, but a retrospectively idealized realm that was an imaginary creation from the start.

Equally important, it was a thoroughly belated passion. Nothing in Roth's early writings, while he was still a Hapsburg subject, shows any special regard for the dynasty or any fondness for imperial institutions. For Roth, the Hapsburg empire did not become a subject of longing until a decade after it had ceased to exist. It was the melancholy story of its slow but supposedly inevitable dissolution that Roth found imaginatively compelling, and in his account the shadow of the approaching catastrophe darkens the entirety of Franz Josef's sixty-eight-year reign. A relentless, deterministic backshadowing orchestrates Roth's Hapsburg narratives. It finds its exact rhetorical embodiment in the repetition of phrases such as "Death crossed his bony hands above our glasses as we drank, but we did not suspect it" (*The Emperor's Tomb*), and in the sententious moralizing that regularly interrupts the narrative of *The Radetzky March*: "Nowadays the notions of honor—personal, family, and professional—by which Herr von Trotta lived are the nearest relics of childish, superstitious legends."

Throughout *The Radetzky March*, in fact, Roth foreshadows the coming catastrophe at every opportunity, usually with highly overwrought rhetoric. During the regimental summer fête that takes place towards the end of the novel, for example, a messenger arrives to interrupt the dancing with news from headquarters. The atmosphere, predictably enough, is tense with the electricity of a summer storm, and the horseman's approach is described as taking place amid "flickering white sheet-lightning and darkened by purple clouds." As the colonel tears open the message, the footman "could not control his suddenly trembling hand." The news, of course, is the report of Franz Ferdinand's assassination, and in the footman's mind there is "a supernatural connection" between the thunder and lightning breaking out all around him and the dreadful news from Sarajevo.

To a remarkable extent, much of the current soft-edged fascination with the final years of imperial Austria is often cast in similar terms. Images of Franz Josef and his wife, the Empress Elisabeth ("Sissi"), are omnipresent in Vienna today, used to sell everything from boxes of chocolate to tickets for concerts, and a visitor could be excused for believing that nothing of importance had occurred since the end of their reign. The endless proliferation of reproductions of Klimt paintings, Thonet chairs, and Wiener Werkstätte jewelry and furniture has turned them into glamorous memorabilia of the Hapsburg era, feeding the same nostalgic commercialism as the formulaic court portraits of the imperial family. And it is not only the Nazi period that is being elided: the country's entire post-World War I experience, including such important developments as the groundbreaking social legislation passed during the first Austrian democratic republic, and the anti-Nazi clerical fascism of Dolfuss and Schuschnigg, is neglected in favor of an apparently inexhaustible fascination with Franz Josef's glory years. The consonance between contemporary reactions and Roth's own judgment certainly helps to account for his resurgent popularity—but it also blinds us to his limitations as a writer.

III.

The Wandering Jews, which appeared in 1927, is a book of impassioned reportage and polemic. One of its chapters opens with a declaration and a question: "No Eastern Jew goes to Berlin voluntarily. Who in all the world goes to Berlin voluntarily?" Well, Joseph Roth, for one. He left Austria for the German capital in 1920 to further his career, and he never spent much time in Vienna again.

The decision was eminently practical. Until the Nazis' ascension to power, Berlin was one of the world's greatest newspaper cities, with more than 2,000 different periodicals available. Roth was quickly taken up by some of the best of these, including the prestigious *Frankfurter Zeitung*, to which he became a regular contributor. For the rest of the decade, Roth was often sent abroad as a special correspondent for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and his articles from France, the Soviet Union, Albania, Poland, and Italy were one of the paper's regular features. Roth's fame as a journalist significantly exceeded his novelistic reputation for most of his life, and in the most recent German edition of his collected works, three of the six volumes are given over to his articles for various periodicals. For Roth, though, the distinction was somewhat arbitrary, since many of his novels, including major works such as *The Radetzky March*, were first serialized in newspapers.

Roth had a wide-ranging curiosity, and his fine eye for the vivid, memorable detail is one of his principal strengths as a writer, irrespective of genre. Both his novels and his reportage often advanced by means of sharply visualized set-pieces, and he was frequently more successful in creating these than he was in inventing a satisfying overall narrative structure. Consider Roth's description, in *Zipper and His Father* (1928), of the place of the coffeehouse in the world of the Viennese—it captures a whole way of life in a few sentences, and is one of the finest realizations of its theme in all of Austrian literature:

> The coffeehouse drew him every evening as the tavern does the drinker and the gaming rooms the gambler. He could no longer live without the sight of the small, round white tables and the square green ones; without the stout pillars which once, in the youth of this coffeehouse, must have underlined its brilliance and elegance, pillars which were now blackened by the smoke, as if by decades of sacrificial fires, and on which hung newspapers, like withered fruit, in shriveled, yellow, clattering binders; without the niches dark with overcoats on overloaded stands, the lavatory in the corridor with its endless comings and goings, in front of which one met and greeted acquaintances, where one could stand for half an hour without noticing how the time flew by. He could not live without the blonde cashier at the counter, who knew everyone by name and distributed their mail to the regulars ... without the waiters, who never changed, never died, never asked the guests what they wanted but just brought their usual order.... Sometimes the coffeehouse resembled a winter encampment of nomads, sometimes a bourgeois dining room, sometimes a

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> great anteroom in a palace, sometimes a warm heaven for the frozen. For it was warm, with an animal warmth, reinforced by glowing coals in three far stoves.

On one subject, moreover, Roth's political instincts were often more prescient than those of many of his literary contemporaries: he recognized the threat posed by the Nazis when hardly anyone in his circle took them seriously. His book *The Spider's Web*, published in 1923, contains the first direct mention of Hitler that I know of in any novel.

YET NONE OF Roth's journalism and very few of his novels drew as powerfully on his own memories and experiences, or touched on as many themes central to his troubled consciousness, as did *The Wandering Jews*; and its appearance in English, translated by Michael Hofmann, offers an excellent introduction to Roth's non-fictional writing. Rather than sustaining a continuous narrative, the book is a series of self-contained but linked essays, each one giving a different glimpse of European Jewry and its various responses to increasingly embattled circumstances. But the book's aim is not merely descriptive. Instead Roth mounts a sustained attack on Western Europeans in general, and on assimilated Western Jews in particular, for their unwarranted sense of superiority over the world of the shtetl.

In his foreword, Roth is determined to distinguish his book from typical journalistic reports on exotic peoples and settings, sent back to entertain sophisticated metropolitan readers. He opens with an extended, sarcastic catalogue of everyone in whom his book "is not interested":

> This book is not interested in the plaudits and endorsements, much less the cabals or criticisms of those who despise, hate, and persecute the Eastern European Jews. It does not address itself to those Western Europeans who, by virtue of the fact that they grew up with elevators and flush toilets, allow themselves to make bad jokes about Romanian lice, Galician cockroaches, or Russian fleas. This book is not interested in those "objective" readers who peer down with a cheap and sour benevolence from the rickety towers of the Western civilization upon the near East and its inhabitants; ... this book does not want to be read by those who would seek to deny their own fathers or forefathers.

Roth seeks only those who have "respect for pain, for human greatness, and for the squalor that everywhere accompanies misery ... readers who feel they might have something to learn from the East," and it is clear that he has little faith that he will find such an audience. Indeed, the emotional force of his argument requires such a pessimistic assumption, since its energy derives from a string of absolute—and heavily sentimentalized—antitheses between Eastern Jewry and Western Jewry that would be threatened by any blurring of his categories, or by any admission that more than a handful of people shared the author's view.

RECENT DISCUSSIONS OF *The Wandering Jews* have praised its melancholy depiction of a people on the verge of extinction, but our knowledge that the world Roth describes was soon to be brutally exterminated has left contemporary readers uncritically responsive to sentimental generalizations at which they would surely balk in any other context. Consider Roth's initial account of the two modes of Jewish existence:

> The Eastern Jew in his homeland knows nothing of the social injustice of the West; nothing of the habitual bias that governs the actions, decisions and opinions of the average Western European; nothing of the narrowness of the Western perspective, jagged with factory smokestacks and framed by powerplants.... The Eastern Jew sees none of the advantages of his own homeland. He sees nothing of the boundless horizon, nothing of the quality of the people, in whom simplicity can produce holy men and murderers, melodies of melancholy, grandeur, and obsessive passion. He fails to see the goodness of the Slav people....

This is simply lazy writing. Clichés pose as specific details, and banal stereotypes substitute for the particularity on which genuine understanding depends. There is no gray zone, no softening of the book's rigid antitheses, and, strangest of all, no acknowledgment that a powerful revival of interest in Eastern Jewry, led by major figures such as Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, had already been going on in Weimar Germany and Austria for several years.

Far from writing against the grain of his reader's assumptions, Roth's bitter jibes at their lost authenticity was a thoroughly conventional stance, and his holding up the life of Eastern European Jewry, centered on "family, faith, and community," as an idealized counter-model was more likely to fulfill the expectations of his audience than to disturb them. Considering the professional choices and the daily experiences of Roth's Jewish readers, there can be no doubt that most of them had little hesitation in rejecting the world of the *Ostjuden*. But that rejection, as we are only beginning to understand with any precision, is often accompanied by (in the words of Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*) "a psychological dependence upon [those who have been] rigorously opposed and excluded at the social level. It is for this reason that what is socially peripheral is so frequently symbolically central," and that customs and traits that have been "expelled as 'Other,' return as the objects of nostalgia, longing and fascination."

FORTUNATELY ROTH WAS too savvy a reporter and too deeply engaged a witness to have remained at this level of admonitory generalization for long. Nostalgia, longing, and fascination are never entirely left behind in his book, but they are enriched by memorable descriptions of individual Jewish communities in an unnamed Galician town that is clearly Brody; in the ghettos of Vienna, Berlin, and Paris; and finally in the Soviet Union. There is also a brief, haunting chapter on Jewish emigration to America, where "consulates want to see more papers than any consulate on earth," and where the arriving Jew is likely to end up in "quarantine," looking "through the bars of his prison [at] the Statue of Liberty."

Not surprisingly, the chapter on the Soviet Union is the weakest in the book, punctuated with dismal assertions such as "Today Soviet Russia is the only country in Europe where anti-Semitism is scorned, though it might not have ceased.... While anti-Semitism has become a subject for study in the West, ... in the new Russia, it remains a disgrace ... [so that] there is hardly any Jewish emigration from Russia anymore." These passages are very disheartening to read. But even here Roth is capable of undercutting the whole shabby rhetoric of pro-Soviet apologetics with individual scenes that are marvels of clear-sighted reportage:

> I had my most depressing experience during a tour of the Jewish quarter of Odessa, known as the Moldovanka. The evening there is a curse, the rising moon a mockery. A thick fog presses down like a condemnation.... Every house comprises five, six, or seven tiny stores. Every store doubles as an apartment. Behind each window, which also serves as a door, is the workshop; behind that is the bed. Over the bed are the children, suspended in bassinets, which misery rocks to and fro. Large, burly men come home: they are Jewish dock workers from the port.... [A]ll the workers labor until late at night. The windows leak a drab yellow light.

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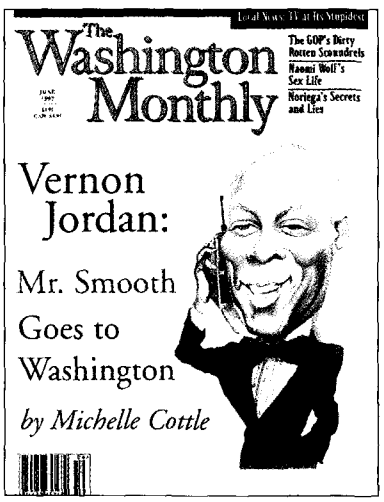

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A strange light that doesn't spread brightness but a kind of gloom with a pale kernel.

Roth's perceptive, sympathetic description of the bleak economic choices ("peddler and installment seller") available to the newly arrived Eastern Jews in cities such as Vienna, and his deft accounts of a visit to a Galician wonder rabbi and a rural Yom Kippur ceremony, have been rightly admired. "They [the shtetl Jews] are not rare visitors of God, they live with him.... [I]n their prayers they inveigh against him, ... they complain at his severity, they go to God to accuse God.... There is no other people that lives on such a footing with their god. They are an old people and they have known him a long time!" Such sentences really are gems of respectful characterization. And yet little attention has been paid to one of the most revelatory—and limiting—features of Roth's whole enterprise.

THROUGHOUT *The Wandering Jews*, Roth never directly challenges the received cluster of words and categories that grounds the very contempt for *Ostjuden* against which he contends. He works valiantly to prove that his cherished "traders, peddlers, brokers, and deal makers" are not "unproductive elements" of society, but he does not address the idea that there is something deeply pernicious in dividing human beings into such categories in the first place. To try to justify Eastern Jewry by arguing that "a peddler is a member of the proletariat," or that the Jewish tailors crowded into Vienna's slums are not sucking "on the marrow of the native population," is already to have conceded far too much. Of course, none of these are Roth's own terms, but it does not occur to him that acquiescing to their use without any mark of resistance means granting their larger validity. Roth seeks only to direct these slanders away from their traditional Jewish targets, not to expose their inherent foulness.

For a serious writer, word choices are never distinct from ethical choices. The link between them is central to the constellation of great Austrian writers and thinkers, from Kraus and Musil to Wittgenstein and Hayek; but there is little trace of it in Roth's journalism or in his novels. He is capable of wonderful local effects, of rapid changes of tone, and sometimes of an emotionally gripping romanticism, but he is not at all the masterful stylist that his many admirers detect in him. Indeed, Roth's mastery consists predominantly in a supple manipulation of an inherited idiom, a traditional vocabulary, rhythm, and sentence structure, not in any search for something more resistant and particular to him.

As Auden remarked in one of his lectures on Shakespeare, a minor artist "never risks failure": he discovers an effective technique, and once he has done so, "his artistic history is over." Major artists, by contrast, are "engaged in perpetual endeavours." As soon as they master a particular style or a particular method of composition, they stop and attempt something new, even if it is at first counter-instinctive. They work against their own facility, in an effort to prevent an attained personal style from becoming a mere mannerism, not caring if the result of such restlessness is an incomplete or "failed" attempt at a new kind of articulation. The difference between Musil and Roth as literary artists turns precisely on Musil's greater willingness to risk everything, including failure, rather than repeat something that he had already taught himself to do. In one of Musil's incomparable formulations from his *Diaries*, "Something is well-written if, after some time, it strikes one as alien—one would be incapable of writing it that way a second time. Such an idea (expression) did not come from the fund that is available for daily expenditure."

Perhaps Roth was never in Vienna long enough to become fascinated by the rigorous questioning of language and the relentless exposure of clichés that marked a whole literary-philosophical generation, even when forced into exile. For this reason, the most enduring popular mythologist of the last days of imperial Austria was, in many ways, unrepresentative of the central achievements of the culture whose loss he so famously lamented.

IV.

IN SPITE OF his claims about his war record, Roth's direct experience of the imperial army was so limited that he had to turn to friends for technical advice to ensure the accuracy of his descriptions of military customs in *The Radetzky March*. To be sure, *The Wandering Jews* draws powerfully on his own history, but nowhere in his book does Roth mention that he was himself one of those Galician Jews whose westward migration, from Brody to Vienna to Berlin and finally to Paris, is the work's principal subject. Nor is there any hint that Roth's own father-in-law was, for a time, one of the poor peddlers in Vienna's Leopoldstadt whose struggles are chronicled with such sympathy. Indeed, as Michael Hofmann acknowledges in his translator's preface, "nowhere does he even say he is a Jew!"

Yet we must be careful about the conclusions that we draw from these omissions. Nothing would be less helpful than to invoke the overused category of "Jewish self-hatred" as an explanation for Roth's deliberate adoption of a sympathetic outsider's voice. In part, the avoidance of any hint of autobiography is meant to give his passionate defense of the *Ostjuden* an apparently disinterested objectivity and persuasiveness. To admit that the writer himself had chosen to abandon the world he was so intent on holding up as a corrective to the West would have undermined the polemical thrust of *The Wandering Jews*, requiring an explanation for his decision that would have resulted in an entirely different kind of narrative.

More significantly, Roth's self-invention was so all-encompassing that no aspect of his life was exempt. By 1927, he had inhabited his own multiple myths too powerfully and too long for him to contemplate incorporating a factual chronicle of his life into his writing. It was never his Jewishness as such on which Roth sought to turn his back—an impossible endeavor in any case, since everyone, including friends, book reviewers, and editors, regularly referred to him as a Jew, and his collected works were included in the list of permanently banned authors that was officially promulgated by the newly installed Nazi government in May 1933. Rather, it was the specific circumstances of his early life that Roth was determined to keep reinventing. His deepest identification was with whatever imaginary biography and imaginary character he was creating for himself at any given moment. But this is just another way of saying that he lived first and foremost in his fictions, which, for everyone but the zealots of identity politics, is a perfectly plausible homeland for a writer.

Throughout his work, Roth portrayed the Galician Jewry of his childhood with affection; but never after *The Wandering Jews*, with the exception of *Hiob* (*Job: The Story of a Simple Man*), a novel that appeared in 1930, did Roth make Jewish life the central theme of a whole book. Even in *The Wandering Jews*, except for isolated episodes such as the brief meeting with the wonder rabbi and the wonderful description of the worshippers in a prayer house, what moved Roth most about the *Ostjuden* was not their faith or their distinctive customs, but their distance from the modern world. Well before the Nazis came to power, Roth was becoming bitterly disenchanted with modern society, and *The Wandering Jews* marks a further stage in his rejection of the left-wing utopian politics that he had supported briefly after the war. Increasingly, it was solely to the values of the past and to the ceremoniousness of time-honored traditions that Roth turned for an alternative

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to the society of his own day—and ultimately the people described in *The Wandering Jews* were a kind of preliminary step on his journey to embracing the Hapsburg cause. The melancholy tone of nostalgia that Roth was to make his own in books such as *The Radetzky March* and *The Emperor's Tomb* received its first sustained trial in *The Wandering Jews*; and in the long run the vanished Dual Monarchy proved a deeper and more fruitful focus for his emotional life than did the shtetl life of Eastern Europe.

WHEN ULRICH, THE protagonist of *The Man Without Qualities*, Musil's matchless novel about the last year of prewar Austria, is made secretary of a committee casting about for ways to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of Emperor Franz Josef's coronation, suggestions about what the empire needs pour in from everywhere. Ruefully, Ulrich concludes that all of these proposals can be divided into two mutually canceling groups, one beginning with "Back to—," the other "Forward to—," since "one half of mankind is looking for salvation in the future and the other half in the past." In the course of his life, Joseph Roth could have sent in submissions fitting both of Ulrich's classifications. For the present never exerted a powerful hold on Roth's imagination or desires; and if he started out looking for the possibility of happiness in a conventional socialist utopia, he soon swerved towards finding it in an equally utopian, but even more unrealizable, imperial past. In the 1930s, his Legitimist politics and his Hapsburg nostalgia were signs that Roth had stopped thinking seriously about the social and political problems that, at least as a journalist, he was still attempting to address.

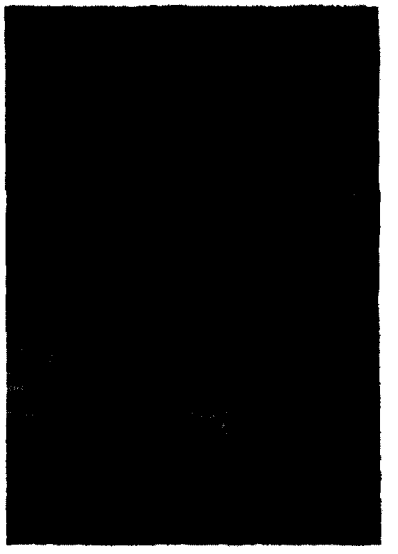
But surely, it is only reasonable to claim, novels are a different matter altogether. Transposed into a personal myth, and embodied in sufficiently persuasive characters and scenes, what might be sheer absurdities in politics or in history can become the stuff of deeply persuasive fiction. In Roth's case, though, the situation is too complicated to be resolved by such a tidy dichotomy. To defend him along these lines ignores more problems than is generally acknowledged. There is little pleasure in being troubled by what so many scrupulous readers have found deeply moving; and yet it seems to me that what is most interesting about books such as *The Radetzky March* and *The Emperor's Tomb* is the extent to which they succeed—in spite of passages of genuinely mediocre writing and formulaic story-telling that ought to have sunk them utterly, but somehow did not.

Locating one's paradise in an irrecoverable past has long been a central theme of European writing. For Baudelaire and Proust, the only paradise we can ever know is the one we have lost, and it is precisely the experience of loss that teaches one to know it at all. Yet in these instances, the writer's paradise is personal, private, and singular. Roth, by contrast, did not merely locate his lost ideal during a particular historical era; rather, it was the entirety of that era, embodied in the figure of its emperor and depicted through its representative public institutions, that constituted the lost homeland.

At the very least, it seems neither reductive nor unjust to ask whether his romantic idealization of the institutions, the customs, and the culture of Franz Josef's empire does not change his responsibility as a storyteller toward the historical world that underlies his nostalgia. Roth's expulsion from his idealized homeland is unrelated to any personal failings, or to any qualities of his own; his paradise was destroyed by its enemies, internal and external, and ultimately by something he thought of as an inevitable malevolent destiny. Hitler was only the most demonic incarnation of that destiny: Roth blamed the whole of modernity for the destruction of his cherished empire and the values that it represented. But to fuse historical fiction with an elegiac longing for a lost paradise is always a risky venture.

ADMITTEDLY, THE THEME of exile and loss has been central to imaginative writing from our culture's very beginning. Whether it is a person, a stretch of shoreline, or the sound of a language, when something basic to one's identity has been torn away, nothing in the world is ever the same again. So for centuries the Jews, exiled from the land of Israel, lamented not so much the loss of familiar buildings and ancestral vineyards, but a fundamental part of what had defined their existence as a people. The description of the sack of Jerusalem and the forced march to Babylon in 2 Kings, or the famous exhortation against forgetfulness in Psalm 137 ("If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning"), are among the oldest and most passionate texts of exile that we possess, and their cadences have helped shape the ways in which the loss of a homeland has been voiced ever since. It is striking how little geographical distance matters in all this. The lost homeland can be as remote as Rome was from the town on the Black Sea to which Ovid was banished by Augustus, or as geographically and culturally close as Dante's Florence was to Verona and Ravenna, where the poet lived after his expulsion.

For Roth, however, it is neither a region



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nor a people, nor even a language, that he mourns. It is a particular moment in history, with its full panoply of official public institutions and functionaries; and in the insistent chronological and social specificity of his nostalgia, he is closer to the sentimentalized vision of *Gone With the Wind* than to the works of the great elegists. Nostalgia has its own logic, its own narrative momentum; and Roth's yearning leads him into a sentimentalized representation of the Dual Monarchy, and especially of Franz Josef, that is often indistinguishable from the high kitsch that was part of the Hapsburg dynasty's own self-representation, and that the Austrian tourist industry is still deploying to great effect today:

> People thought Franz Joseph knew less than they did because he was so much older than they were. But he may have known more than a great many of them. He saw the sun setting on his empire, but he said nothing. He knew that he would die before its downfall. Often he feigned innocence and acted delighted when people gave him a long-winded explanation about things he understood quite well.... He was delighted at their vanity in proving to themselves that they were smarter than he. The Kaiser disguised his wisdom as simplicity, since it does not become an emperor to be as wise as his advisers. Far better to appear simple than wise.

There is only one Combray, and Proust's depiction of his vanished childhood there is incomparable, not just because of his genius as a novelist, but because we have only his words about the place to go by. Since the radical selectivity of our perception and our ongoing imaginative transformation of the external world is one of Proust's major concerns, the abyss between his Combray and the real town of Illiers, on which he drew, is fully thematized in the book itself. But one of the central problems in Roth is that he tries to treat the Hapsburg empire both as his private, lost edenic home and as a world historical power whose collapse was a founding event of modern society as a whole, without ever acknowledging that there is a tension between the two kinds of representations that needs to be worked out in the novel itself.

The problem is not so much that Roth has conflated his personal unhappiness with history's catastrophes, but that he has not found a compelling literary structure to make such a conflation persuasive. Since *The Radetzky March* is told by an omniscient and often intrusive narrator who regularly enters the text to spell out the historical significance of what is happening, comparisons to other accounts of the same events are not only legitimate, they are virtually invited. Indeed, even Roth's most ardent champions regularly invoke Musil's handling of the same historical material as an inevitable point of comparison, usually along the lines of seeing Roth (in Nadine Gordimer's words) as "tender where Musil is detachedly playful."

But this misrepresents both writers. Much of the later part of *The Man Without Qualities* is anything but detached—think of the "holy conversations" between Ulrich and Agathe—while Roth has many moments of sharp irony. Instead, it is the quality of their irony and their sentimentality that is so different in Roth and Musil. Roth looks entirely outward and backward. By insisting so single-mindedly on the inevitability of the empire's collapse, and by turning history into the acting-out of a pre-determined script, Roth removes any element of meaningful choice from his characters or his story, and so the nostalgia is never darkened, as in Musil, by real pain for squandered possibilities. The historical inevitability that drives Roth's story forward reduces the ethical dimension to an entirely backward-looking sentimentality that is the antithesis of Musil's anguished search for a new way of writing that would be both the portrait of a vanished era and a quest for *das rechte Leben*, the right life and the right way to live that life into an unpredictable future.

Roth's responsibility as a storyteller toward the historical world that is both the object of his nostalgia and the subject of his story has nothing to do with how much research he did, or with the accord between his reading of events and the readings of professional historians. Indeed, we know that Roth took great care regarding the accuracy of his depiction of local customs and occurrences. But what Roth refuses to do is to let the separate moments of the story exist with any sense of their independent significance before subsuming them into his larger interpretive framework.

Consider the wonderfully visualized scene in *The Radetzky March* when Carl Joseph von Trotta takes his mistress to watch their emperor enter Saint Stephen's Cathedral at the climax of the annual Corpus Christi procession:

> The light-blue breeches of the infantry were radiant. Like the very incarnation of ballistic science, there followed the coffee-brown artillery. The blood-red fezzes on the heads of the sky-blue Bosnians shone in the sun like toy bonfires lit by Islam in honor of His Apostolic Majesty. In black lacquered carriages sat the gold-decked Knights of the Golden

Bicoastal: Bobby Darin at the Copa

for my fathers

In the summer of my sixteenth year, my stepfather
got a pulpit in Beverly Hills he would have loved
to have been permanent: Rabbi to the stars.
We rented a furnished pad on Sunset Strip
where many an afternoon it was the singer Jack
Jones and me alone at the pool,
only Jack's deck chair was surrounded
by an entourage: agents, managers, vocal coaches,
toupees, gold chains, Hawaiian shirts,
who yakked and gesticulated with cigars as batons
about his current gig at the Coconut Grove,
analyzing his previous night's performance
for what should be kept, what dropped;
and I thought what a good singer he was—

("though not as good," both the fathers agreed,
"as his father, Allan Jones, the tenor")—
but that onstage he lacked the personal touch
of Bobby Darin at the Copa when he stepped down
and mingled among the audience and sang "Dream
Lover" to a golden-haired little girl
who would have been in kindergarten,
and asked in a tender and intimate voice
"How old are you darlin'?"
and "is the room too smoky for you?"
My father'd consented to take me to see
Darin at the Copa, because he'd read that the kid
could really sing unlike the others
he considered goons with pompadours
who depended on echo chambers and tricks.

Mark Rudman

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Fleece and the black-clad, red-cheeked municipal councilors. After them, like majestic hurricanes, fluttered the horsehair plumes of the infantry bodyguard.... Black carriages on high imposing wheels, with rubber tires and slender spokes, drew up in front of the gates.... Government officials in black cocked hats and with gold-embroidered collars and slender court swords came dignified and perspiring from the procession. White schoolgirls, blossoms in their hair and candles in their hands, walked home.... Above the bright hats of the bright ladies who paraded their beaux as if on leads, were spread the delicate canopies of their sunshades.... Over the slow strains of the anthem, the cheers fluttered like small white flags amid huge banners painted with coats of arms.

This is a brilliantly orchestrated symphony of colors. The rhythm of the sentences and the order of the individual details as they enter the spectators' field of vision perfectly capture the excited, festive mood of the occasion and Carl Joseph's dazzled response. Exactly this scene was quoted by James Wood in these pages, in the course of his powerful defense of Roth's novel—but without a crucial paragraph that comes right in the middle of the description: "Carl Joseph ... saw the golden glamor which emanated from the procession but did not hear the somber beating of vulture wings. They were hovering above the double eagles of the Hapsburgs, these vultures, their sibling foes." Throughout *The Radetzky March*, Roth is almost obsessively incapable of trusting his material enough to stand without such grating commentary. And the narrator's hectoring intrusiveness is the direct logical consequence, at the level of the individual scene, of the back-shadowing that orchestrates the story as a whole and compromises even its finest achievements.

Still, those achievements are real enough to have secured Roth a significant readership. His true strength resides not in the sweeping historical vision for which he is most often praised, but in small scenes and small events, such as the masterful rendering of the awkward, mutually embarrassed conversations between young Carl Joseph and his father, the district commissioner. The more such scenes can resist being read primarily as instances of the novel's master plot, the more impressive they become.

Musil and Schnitzler and Zweig may give us a subtler, more penetrating portrait of the last days of imperial Austria, but it is Roth whose version of the story seems to have affected its audience with an emotional force that has eclipsed many of its rivals. Yeats speculated that all great art requires "the little limited life of the fable, which is always the better the simpler it is," and *The Radetzky March* has some of those fable-like qualities. Chief among them, and certainly Roth's masterstroke, was the invention of a single family, the Trottas, whose story, convincingly depicted through three generations, is so deeply intertwined with the fate of the empire that they become emblematic—too seamlessly emblematic, for some tastes—of its larger destiny.

Not only is Roth nostalgic himself, he satisfies our own nostalgic need to see life unfold as fate. To see history revealed as destiny confers a coherence and a legibility upon the world; and we continue to respond to this in art, irrespective of how we would regard such a proposition in other areas of our lives. It is true that the greatest modern novels ask more of us, and of themselves as well. But within their own less exigent terms, Roth's novels amount to an impressive achievement—and the fact that it should be a lower-class Jew from the margins of the empire whose fables about Franz Josef and his universe resonate so powerfully is an irony at whose unlikeliness it is impossible not to feel a sympathetic wonder. ■

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JERUSALEM DIARIST

Siren Song

LIKE MANY AMERICANS, I grew up with an ambivalent, even cynical, attitude toward public commemorative holidays. Memorial Day, for example, is less about remembrance of war and death than about recreation and the start of summer. I was therefore unprepared for my feelings on April 19 in Jerusalem on Yom Hashoah, the official day of remembrance of the Holocaust. I had been invited to conduct the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra in a nationally broadcast memorial concert that evening. Starting at ten o'clock the same morning, a two-minute siren rang throughout Israel. I was at the dress rehearsal for the evening's concert, in front of nearly 90 musicians. As soon as the siren sounded, the entire orchestra, along with everyone in sight, stood in complete silence for two minutes. Any musician will tell you that two minutes can be an eternity. We have all experienced one minute of silence at funerals and assemblies. But that extra minute makes all the difference. With the wailing siren in the background, it took about 40 seconds to lose one's connection with the ordinary clock of time and the assemblage of mundane preoccupations that regularly clutter one's mind. When the second minute began, I felt overwhelmed by the recognition that each of us had begun to focus on the object of remembrance, the Holocaust. My oldest daughter, Sarah, who had come with me on the trip and was somewhere in Jerusalem, had exactly the same reaction as she watched the city and its people come to a standstill.

I ARRIVED IN AMERICA AS A TWO-year-old with my parents and siblings. My parents were Polish Jews; my father's mother and grandparents died in the Lodz Ghetto, and his only brother perished in the Warsaw Ghetto. The only survivors in my mother's large family were her parents, one of my uncles, and his wife, a Polish Catholic and righteous gentile who risked her life saving Jews. The uncle after whom I was named, my mother's older brother, was killed in the Warsaw Ghetto along with the rest of the family. My grandparents survived the Ghetto and then labor camp. The war and the extermination of European Jewry were the dominant subjects in our home. My parents did practically all their socializing with fellow emigrants, each with a connection to an obliterated past to which we the children had no access except through remembrance.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THINKING about the Holocaust while growing up in America and thinking about it in Israel is related to the different role the Holocaust plays in each nation's history. In America, the Holocaust, which has been abused and exploited, is at best a metaphor for the absence of progress and humanity. It marks the fact that the externals of affluence and civilization offer no impediment to radical evil and can actually enable systematic mass murder. The Holocaust is understood less as a unique phenomenon in modern history than as its most prominent example of racial hatred.

STANDING IN FRONT OF THE JERUsalem Symphony Orchestra in silence, I realized that, in Israel, the Holocaust means something very different. It is the simplest way of justifying the claim that once upon a time there was a Jewish nation that was forcibly dispersed. This seems so obvious. But it has become fashionable to view the Zionist movement for a Jewish home in Palestine as an act of colonialism. Yet the Jewish settlement there and the continual influx of Jews from all over the world are, in fact, not comparable to colonization. Looking out at the orchestra in silence, I realized that I had spent a week rehearsing musicians from Russia, Poland, Morocco, Argentina, the United States, Romania, Hungary, Germany, and on and on. The history of anti-Semitism, and the Nazis' success (with worldwide tacit and active cooperation) in virtually ending thousands of years of continuous Jewish presence in Europe, constitute evidence of the proposition that the Jews were regarded, from the first century B.C. on, as a displaced and foreign nation whose presence outside their original homeland was unnatural and unwanted. The persistent instability of diasporas (with the exception of America, where skin color and affluence rendered the Jews members of a majority), when seen through the prism of the Holocaust, gives the right of return a secular and not a religious legitimacy.

AS I STOOD IN THAT SEEMINGLY END-less expanse of two minutes of collective silence, except for the screaming siren, it seemed possible that the music we had been asked to perform in memoriam might be the most powerful way to say this. And to say something more as well: that if Jews and Arabs are to live in peace, the reciprocal recognition, symbolic and practical, of the legitimate, albeit conflicting, rights of each cannot be overlooked or dismissed, despite all the hate and prejudice that flourish on both sides.

THE PROGRAM BEGAN WITH KARL Amadeus Hartmann's *Miserae*, written in 1934. Hartmann, a great twentieth-century composer, was a young non-Jewish German who exhibited exemplary decency. He practiced inner emigration and refused any participation in the public life of the Third Reich. *Miserae* is a searing work of irony and pathos dedicated to the first victims of Nazism and to those "who must die hundredfold and must sleep for eternity. We will not forget you." Hartmann used a musical language explicitly in opposition to Nazi aesthetics. He was not a hero, he just had no doubts about the distinctions between good and evil. But he was not homeless. Emigration was unthinkable. So powerful was his sense of place that he remained, sacrificing his career and denying his ambitions. It did not occur to him that it would be possible to live anywhere else but in Germany—no matter how much he hated the regime or the behavior of his neighbors.

THE HARTMANN WORK WAS FOLlowed by Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* (*Songs on the Death of Children*), beautifully sung by the Russian-born mezzo-soprano Susanna Poretsky. No musician of Jewish origin felt so acutely the sense of homelessness as did Mahler. His conversion to Catholicism enabled him to triumph in Vienna. Despite worldwide fame, he never found a sense of place. The program ended with Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony, a selection that puzzled me at first. Legend has it that the symphony is about Beethoven's ambivalent but ultimately critical fascination with Napoleon. But the *Eroica* is a four-movement drama about the human struggle for freedom and reason, using music Beethoven wrote for the legend of the Creatures of Prometheus. The work ends triumphantly. It is an essay on the possibilities of humanism.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST and the violence that permeates the Israeli and Palestinian nations, the *Eroica* made its point not in words but in sound—about what we can become and what is required of us all to live together in peace and freedom without the manipulation of language and ideas that readily justify the shedding of each other's blood.

LEON BOTSTEIN

LEON BOTSTEIN is president of Bard College and music director of the American Symphony Orchestra.

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USA Today reports:

"Score goes up for charters"

The Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO) actively supports parent choice to empower families and increase educational options for Black children.

BAEO endorses a variety of options for these parents: charter schools; home schooling; public-private partnerships; tax-supported vouchers; privately financed scholarships to private schools; tuition tax credits; and innovations in existing public schools.

USA Today recently reported on three studies involving charter schools. The full article is at www.schoolchoiceinfo.org under "School Choice News." Here are excerpts:

"After a decade of mixed results, new studies show strong academic gains in test scores for children in charter schools, with some of the biggest improvements among the lowest performing students.

"Unlike traditional public schools, charters are run by parents, teachers and other groups free of many regulations, in return for accountability on finances and student performance....

"Three new studies document big gains:

"Advantage Schools, a private Boston-based firm that manages 15 inner-city charter schools in seven states and the District of Columbia, found [gains] on two national standardized tests....

"The Phoenix-based Goldwater Institute, commissioned by the Arizona Education Department, found that in both reading and math, two to three consecutive years in a charter school had a greater positive impact on test scores than did those years in a traditional public school....

"Western Michigan University researchers found that Pennsylvania charter public schools posted gains on state assessments [that substantially exceeded] their host school districts....

"All three studies found that, on average, students starting in charter schools have lower academic scores initially than traditional public school students."

BAEO believes the positive results from these studies are especially significant, given recent discouraging national news about the unacceptable academic achievement of students, mostly of color, in American schools.

Describing these new results, *Education Week* reported that the "divide between the highest- and lowest-performing students...has grown...[Fourth grade] reading achievement has been very stubborn...Just one-tenth of black and 13 percent of Hispanic 4th graders were considered proficient in reading."

Parental School Choice is Widespread — Unless You're Poor

Parents throughout the country are reacting to such news. For example, parents and community leaders in Chester, Pennsylvania demonstrated their interest in structural educational reform and innovative educational options for children. Parents and the school board in Chester voted to let all its public schools be managed by three private educational management organizations: LearnNow, Edison Schools, and Mosaic.

BAEO believes that the new evidence about charter schools suggests that expanding educational options for parents can be an important step in raising the academic achievement of low-performing students.

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Black Alliance for Educational Options

For more information go to: www.schoolchoiceinfo.org

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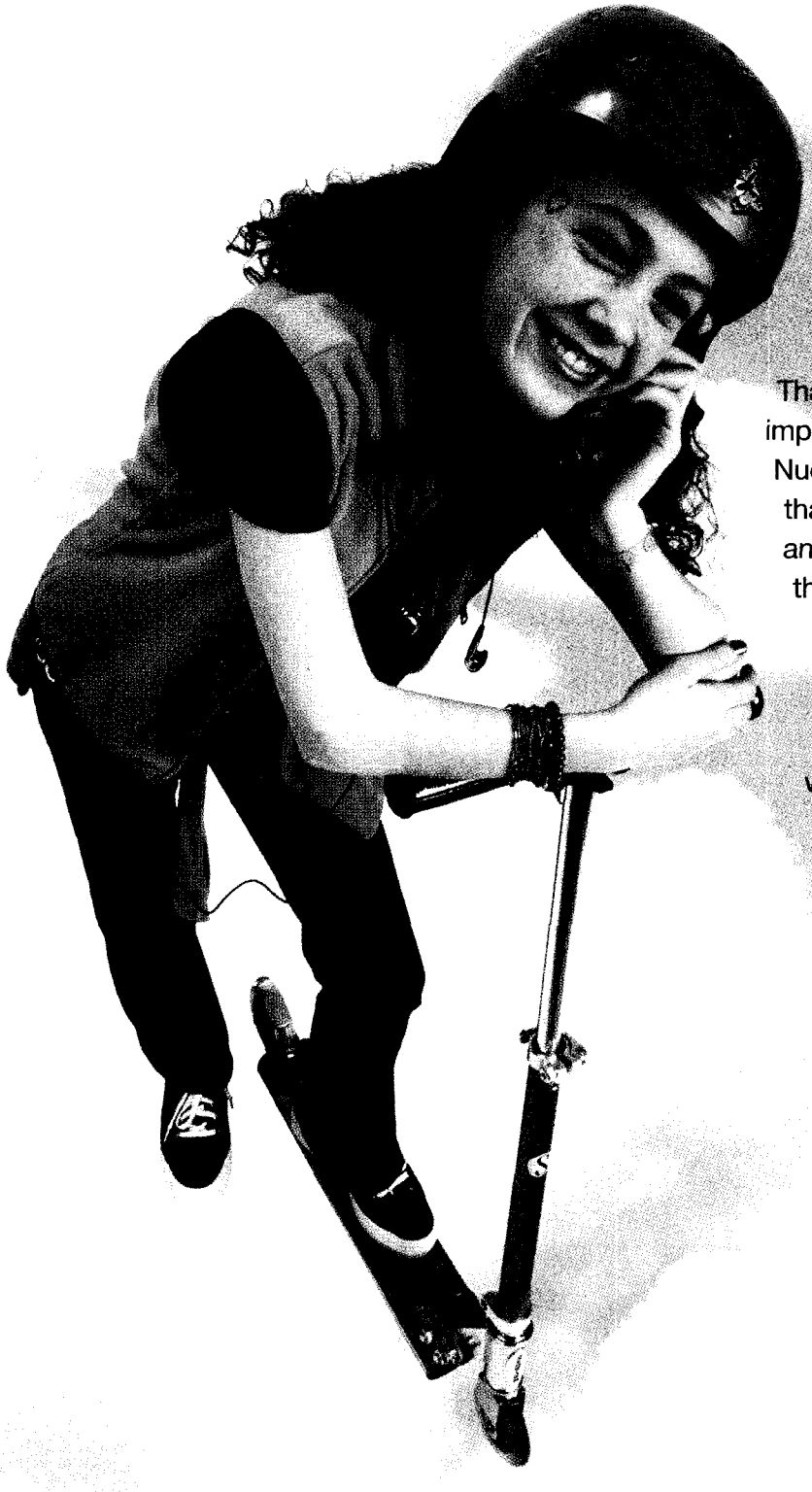

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